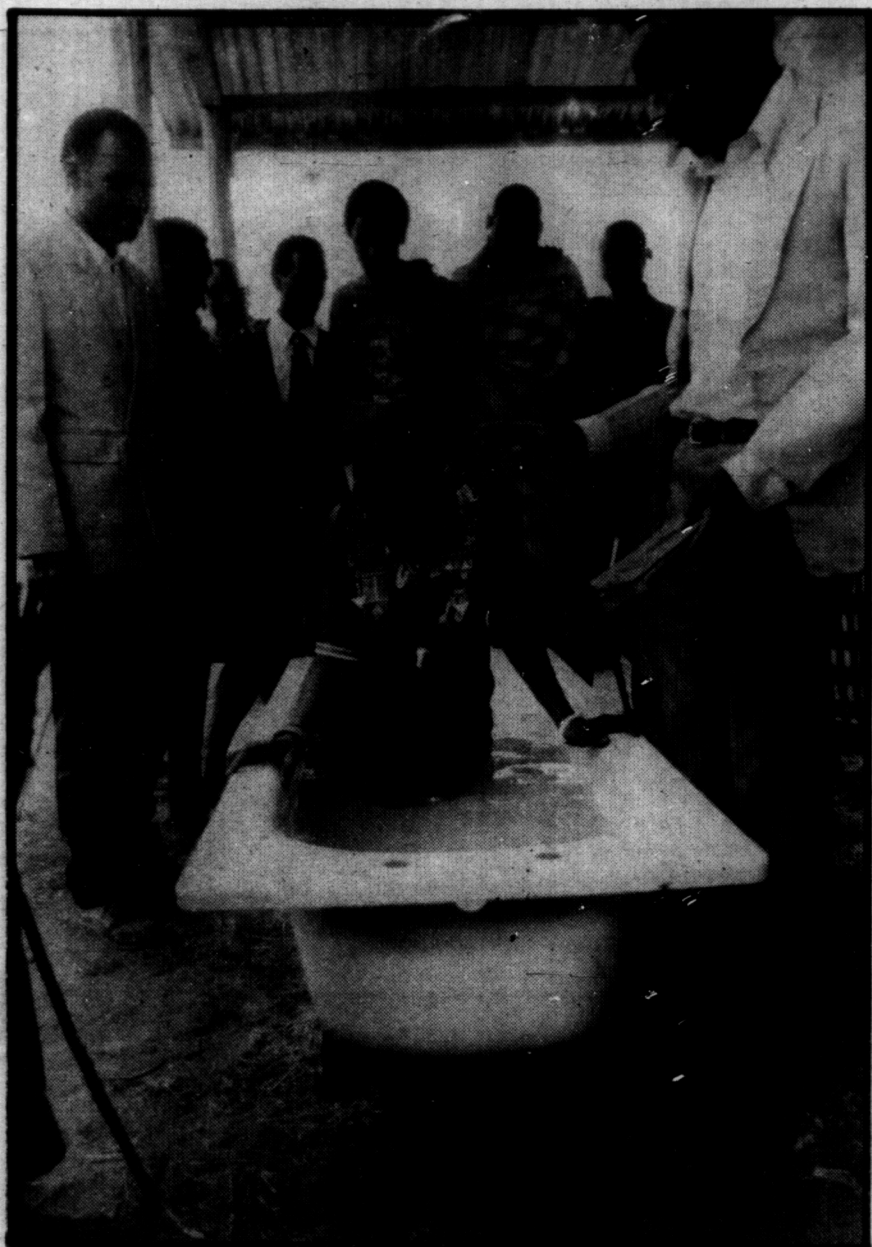


The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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BAPTISM BY BATHTUB — During the dry season in Kenya's Matapato region, where Maasai tribes trek miles for water, visiting pastor Joseph Kikuria, right, prepares to baptize Maasai believer Mary Maatana. Visiting Baptists and caped Maasai sing and watch Eluanata Baptist Church's first baptism. Southern Baptist missionary Bruce Schmidt (not pictured) transports water and the bathtub to Baptist churches in the area. For many new Maasai believers, their baptism is the first time they have had their head completely under water, he said. "To the Maasai (the baptism service is) nothing short of a miracle in this land of scrub brush and dust." (FMB PHOTO by Ron Ragan.)

National convocation offers celebration of biblical message

NASHVILLE — A wide array of Southern Baptist leaders will deal with "every aspect of becoming a Great Commission church" during the National Convocation on the Bible planned for April 21-23 in Nashville, according to Harry Piland, director of the Sunday School division at the Sunday School Board.

The three-day convocation at the Nashville Convention Center is planned to celebrate the message of the Bible as the foundation for the work of Southern Baptists in evangelism, Sunday School and missions.

Piland said the event is a "celebration focused on the Word of God as the Sunday School Board begins our second century of serving Southern Baptists." The board is observing its centennial year in 1990-91.

Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, recently called to First Church, Dallas, Texas, will preach the opening sermon. William Hendricks, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., will lead daily Bible expositions.

Among the seminar leaders will be four Southern Baptist seminary presidents: Roy Honeycutt, Southern in Louisville; Lewis Drummond, Southeastern in Wake Forest, N.C.;

"The Sunday School Board begins second century."

Russell Dilday, Southwestern in Fort Worth; and Milton Ferguson, Midwestern in Kansas City, Mo.

Other Southern Baptist agency leaders directing seminars include Dellanna O'Brien, executive director, Woman's Missionary Union; Richard Land, executive director, Christian Life Commission; and Darrell Robinson, vice president for evangelism, Home Mission Board.

Piland said the seminars will "cover what the Bible says about evangelism and reaching people."

Some of the seminar topics will include a preview of the 1992 January Bible Study book, learning how to explore biblical background material, biblical background previews of upcoming studies in Sunday school materials, use of the Bible in worship, helps for sermon preparation, using computers in sermon preparation, age-level conferences and issue topics such as aging, marriage and family, sanctity of human life, children and

salvation, and ecology.

"This will be a time to celebrate being a part of the grand family of Southern Baptists. People will feel pride in being Southern Baptist and having a Sunday School Board that is committed to the message of the Bible," Piland predicted.

"... a time to celebrate being part of a grand family...."

Other aspects of the convocation include dramatic and music presentations, a showcase of Southern Baptist materials, and a commissioning service for home and foreign missionaries.

Southern Baptists will have an opportunity to nominate Sunday School teachers with 25 years or more experience for a special Sunday School teacher recognition. The nomination process will begin in summer 1991, said Larry Ware, convocation coordinator.

Registration information will be mailed to Southern Baptist churches in April 1991.

Not many can say, "I've reared 87 children!"

By Breena Kent Paine

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Not many people can say they have reared 87 children. But as parents for 81 foster children, four of their own, one grandchild, and one nephew, Frank and Pat Fell feel parenting is their ministry.

When Fell's nephews were abused, placed in foster care, and then molested by their foster family, the Fell family felt a calling to provide a stable, loving, Christian home for children through foster care.

Although they could not help his nephews, one of which is now in jail for murder, they hoped they could have an influence on the lives of others in foster care.

The Fells took in their first foster children in 1975, while Fell was a student at Florida Baptist College. A woman had abandoned her two babies, 9 months and 18 months old, and the Fells were assigned to care for them. When the mother came back for her children at Christmas, the Fells asked her to live with them for two weeks first.

Mrs. Fell taught Kim the children's routines — when they ate, when they took naps, how to make them feel loved. Then one day, as the Fells were putting on a family puppet show for Christmas, "she sat transfixed" as she watched the story of Jesus, Mrs. Fell said.

Afterwards, Kim asked why people who follow God have been persecuted so much in the past. Mrs. Fell hesitated, knowing she had the oppor-

tunity to share Christ but not knowing quite how to answer.

Then the Fells' 8-year-old son, Frankie, blurted out, "The bad people would come in and tell you if you say you love the devil and hate Jesus, you can live; but if you say you love Jesus and hate the devil, you have to die."

The young mother looked at him seriously. "What if the bad people came in and told you that you had to love the devil or they'd chop off your parents' heads?" she asked.

Frankie glanced down as if thinking, then looked her in the eye and said, "I'd say, 'Chop 'em off!'"

"But why would you want your parents to be killed?" Kim persisted.

"Cause then they would be in heaven with Jesus, and that's more better than anything," he answered.

The next day, as Mrs. Fell talked with an FBTC professor and attended a chapel service at the college, she felt compelled to tell the young mother about God.

"I ran into the house with my Bible in one hand and a Four Spiritual Laws tract in the other, ready for battle," Mrs. Fell said. She grabbed Kim and said, "Let's talk."

"I opened my Bible to the Roman Road (a series of verses showing the plan of salvation) and started on Page 1," Mrs. Fell said. "I had barely gotten to Page 2 when the kids started fussing. I shoved some food across the

table to them and went on through the end."

Then she asked, "Kim, would you like to ask Jesus to be your Savior and Lord?"

"Yes," Kim answered. "I always wanted to know what it was you had, but I didn't think it was for me because I didn't think I deserved it."

"She bowed her head and (prayed) after me; and when she lifted her head, she was glowing," Mrs. Fell said.

From that moment, sharing Christ with foster children and their family members became a natural part of the Fells' life, as they strove not to let a child leave their home without having heard the gospel message.

When the Fells were married 25 years ago, however, they were not yet Christians. They met in a bar in Denver, and were married 10 days later in a jail, the only place they could find a qualified person to do the job.

Mrs. Fell urged her husband to go to church with her somewhere, but he refused. Then one day, as they were attending a relative's funeral, Fell was impressed with the preacher. "If you can find out who that preacher was," he told Mrs. Fell, "then I'll go to his church." But no one could remember his name; they had randomly chosen him from a telephone book.

The Fells were living in Greenville, Miss., at the time, and when a neighborhood church, Greenfield

Baptist, provided what the Fells saw as "free babysitting" by taking their kids to Sunday School, they jumped at the chance to have a morning alone.

About three weeks later, Fell and Mrs. Fell attended a special church program for the children. When the pastor, Paul Brooks — a New Orleans Seminary alumnus who now serves at First Church of Raytown, Mo. — stood up to speak, Fell exclaimed, "That's him!"

That night, Mrs. Fell gave her life to Christ. Their daughter, Kelly, became a Christian the next day. Then on Tuesday, the family attended a revival service at the church.

During the invitation after the sermon, "Kelly was standing next to us praying earnestly for Frank, and Fell was holding my hand so tightly I thought it was going to break," Mrs. Fell said. "Then our daughter Kim stepped out, and Kelly said out loud, 'God, that's the wrong one!'"

"All of a sudden, first thing I knew, the pressure was off my hand and Frank was gone," Mrs. Fell continued. "I looked, and he was running down the aisle. He grabbed that preacher and jerked him to his knees."

Fell, a native of Trenton, N.J., felt called to the gospel ministry soon after his conversion. Later, he was the director of Moonlake Baptist Assembly, New Port Richey, Fla.; and a bivocational pastor for Calvary Church, Holiday, Fla., and First Church, Inglis, Fla. As his second job,

he worked as a mechanic and a building contractor and painter, foster parenting all the while.

As the pastor's family, they were an example. "Some people would say they couldn't come to church because their kids were too much trouble," Mrs. Fell said. "But they couldn't tell us that. We've had as many as nine at one time, got them all to church, and I've cooked the lunch meal as well."

Through their home have passed children who were retarded, rebellious, ridden with abuse, rejected; but each one has experienced at least once the consistent love of a stable, Christian family through the Fells, who have leaned on "the ability of God to intercede where man cannot" in the lives of hurting children and their families.

Now that their children have grown up and moved away, the Fells are finding a "place of rest" at New Orleans Seminary, where Fell is studying for his master of divinity degree.

"Here we are, having left the pastorate ministry after 19 years. It's the first time in our lives we've been alone, and we're having a ball!" Mrs. Fell said.

Fell hopes to seek a doctoral degree and wants to teach one day. Meanwhile, Mrs. Fell is writing a book on their experiences she hopes to name "To Lose a Life."

Paine is in the PR dept. of NOBTS.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

A giant stalks the land

Television has been praised and lambasted. It is called America's biggest baby sitter and a warm companion for the elderly. America's new one-eyed god and our new gift of tongues! Robert Sarnoff called it the "central nervous system of the social body."

Meanwhile, in London, Malcolm Muggeridge declared that media has provided the devil with the greatest opportunity since Adam and Eve. In the eyes of many, a new giant stalks our land and the Davids are out watching the sheep — or television.

Comedian Steve Allen says the "flow is carrying us all along right into the sewer." It teaches us that the more things you possess, the better you will enjoy life. The failure to present the whole of life, this one-sided presentation with little possibility of choice, has conditioned the viewers.

Even now read-my-lips advocates are saying, "Turn it off, unplug it, you are not being forced to watch it." True! And the good Samaritan did not have to get involved with the victim of the robbers. Like the priest and the

Levite, he could have "turned it off."

There is a parable floating around where all of society is in a boat. Each citizen has his allotted space. One free spirit decides he wants to drill a hole in the boat. To the alarmed citizens he says, "It's my drill, this is my space, butt out. I can do what I want. This is a free country." Admired by some, ignored by most, he continues to drill. After all, what he does in the privacy of his own home is his business.

The government ought to do something. Water is rising; we could sink! Why don't the churches give us bigger bailing buckets? Water continues to seep in. Perhaps, if we could mix a little good water with the harmful water, even give it a rating — PG, PG-13, NC-17 — it would do less damage.

Children watch television 30 to 40 hours each week. This is more time than they spend in school, not to mention church. They will see 200,000 commercials and 10,000 hours of violence before they vote. It robs the home of meaningful conversation and

fellowship and creates a world of make believe for young and old.

Okay, Okay! But I'm still going to watch "The Bold and the Restless." I've been watching TV all my life and enjoyed most of it. Sure there will be some bad things, but that just bounces off me — I know reality. So we reason one with another.

What can we do? Listen to the TV industry and turn it off. Choose what you will watch. Try a television-free evening with games and conversation with your family. Don't hesitate to voice your objections to TV stations and advertisers for violence and immorality. Praise them for the good and decent presentations.

It is said that we are drowning in a sea of information and starving for knowledge. There are some wonderful television shows. The documentaries are informative and often inspirational. However, the giant is casting a long shadow across the land. He is making impressions that time will not erase and will bear fruit in future generations.



Wise readers

These are busy times for most people. Allocation of time for various tasks is automatic. The average person has allocated a number of hours to improve his mind and seek information.

Thus we have tried to visualize the readers of the Baptist Record and proffer the right amount of words for the designated reading time.

In this vision I've seen Reader A. He or she is very methodical and breathlessly awaits the coming of the state Baptist paper. The fireplace is decorated with lovely flames, soft music plays in the background. As soon as the Record is retrieved, he slides into the lounge and pulls the lever to notch four. The telephone is off the hook and the door bell is unplugged. He moans in ecstasy as he contemplates an hour of uninterrupted reading.

Meanwhile, across town, Reader B is not able to get to the paper until 6:30 the next morning. He has 10 minutes before his bus comes. He has already dropped Golden Lite pancake syrup on his white shirt. His wife is having to yell over the noise to tell him about Junior's braces. The coffee is too hot and he spatters the editorial page with the effort to cool it. He reaches "Names in the News" just as the bus blows the horn.

Reader C is unable to wait 'til he reaches home. He props it on the steering wheel and reads it at traffic

lights and stop signs. He is a speed reader deluxe and has been known to cover all three Sunday School lessons during a caution light.

Probably Reader D should take the Pulitzer Reading Prize. Somehow he manages to read it between the post office box and the trash can by the front door. Never mind that his family might like to read it. He has seen it.

However you read it, remember that informed Baptists are participating Baptists. One editor expresses it by saying, "You can inform the unenlisted, but you can never enlist the uninformed."

In the Baptist Record they will read of missions — local and worldwide. Christian education, evangelism, stewardship, news related to pastor-church relationships, feeding the flock, and general church news in most every issue.

What other visitors can go to every family in your church for approximately 11 cents per week? Samuel Zwemer, missionary to the Muslims, said, "No other agency can penetrate so deeply, witness so daringly, abide so persistently, and influence so irresistibly as the printed page."

The Baptist Record in one sense does not cost — it pays. Your church will be better off with the Baptist Record going every week to every home. This new year would make a good beginning.

Guest opinion . . .

Take time to plan buildings

By James L. Harrell

A call came to the church building consultant. "We have forms set for a 40' x 60' building. Please send us a set of plans to fit the slab that will be poured tomorrow." On another occasion the same consultant received a different request. "Our church voted last night to build a 60' x 170' building. Please come next week and show us how to divide it up and how to do the walls and ceilings."

"Absurd!" you say! These are actual experiences. But, before you are too critical, what approach would you take if your church were to elect you as a member of a "building committee?" In the first place, it is best to reserve the title, "building committee," for the group that supervises the actual construction. "Building survey and planning" is descriptive of the initial work a committee should undertake who has been elected by the church and requested to look into building needs. This or other titles might be more appropriate for the over-all committee. To use the name, "building committee," implies that the committee is to get a building underway — with or without plans that meet the needs of the church.

It should be recognized that a building should be designed to meet the needs of the church, to help carry out the ministries of the church. Therefore, the first stage of a committee's work is to determine the ministries of the church. A written statement of the purpose or mission of the church would be helpful. A survey of the church community to

determine growth potential and ministries needed should be a must. A study of property requirements to provide for those ministries, including parking, must be determined. Adequate space requirements for the various activities must be known. A study of existing building floor space should be made to determine if maximum use is being made of it. Proper furnishings and equipment should be considered. All of this information is developed and collected during the "survey" stage of work.

The second stage of the committee's work is "planning." Preliminary floor plans for renovating or re-arranging existing space for maximum use and preliminary floor plans for new space should be developed. This is the time that the size and dimensions are determined. The ministries to be carried out will dictate, to a large degree, the size and shape of the building. The amount of available land, the topography, and shape of the land will have a bearing on the size and shape of a new building. The beginning point should never be a certain size building or a certain number of rooms.

At the same time preliminary floor plans are drawn, a plot plan should be developed, showing present structures, proposed structures, and all future possible additions. This plot plan shows not only the exact spot for proposed buildings, but parking, recreation space, landscaping, drainage, and other land use.

At this stage the services of an architect may be needed. However, the

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board provides the services of a church building consultant to churches without charge. He is available to meet with committees and suggest procedures and information which should be gathered so that an architect or designer could develop the preliminary floor plans and a plot plan. He can then request that the Church Architecture Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board develop preliminary floor plans and a plot plan to show the best use of the property and to provide for the ministries of the church. These preliminary drawings could then be placed into the hands of an architect who would develop detailed plans and specifications. The work done by the church building consultant usually amounts to about 15% of an architect's time. There is no charge for the service of the church building consultant of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

During the survey phase of the work, the committee would determine the estimated cost of the project and avenues available to the church to secure the funds.

The third and final phase of the project is "construction." Before construction is begun, a financial package should be put together that assures the church of adequate funds for the new structure, renovation of existing space (if needed), site preparation, furniture, equipment, musical instruments, sound equipment (if needed), architect's fees, per-

mit costs, and contingencies. Also before construction can begin, a complete set of plans and specifications should be developed by an architect who is familiar with the ministries of a Baptist church or who will follow guidelines that are available to architects.

The construction will usually require from three to 12 months. Most churches should expect that about 18 months is needed from the time a

survey and planning committee is selected until a new building is occupied. Larger churches will take longer.

For assistance in planning for better use of present buildings or for developing plans for new buildings, contact the church building consultant of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.

Harrell is church building consultant, MBCB.

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First, Jackson, is listed in "largest churches in America"

ATLANTA (BP) — Nineteen Southern Baptist Convention churches appear on a newly published list of the largest churches in America, while 25 SBC churches appear on a similar list of the 100 fastest-growing churches in America.

Both lists were compiled by John Vaughan, a church growth professor at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. The lists are included in the 1991-92 edition of "The Almanac of the Christian World," published by Tyndale House.

Vaughan's listing of the largest churches in America is based upon 1989-90 worship attendance, not upon membership.

North Phoenix Church in Phoenix, Ariz., is listed as the sixth largest church in America, with an average attendance of 9,500. Second Church in Houston ranks eighth with 8,500 in attendance.

The two Southern Baptist churches fall behind First Church of Hammond, Ind., Willow Creek Community Church of South Barrington, Ill., Calvary Chapel of Santa Ana, Calif., Thomas Road Church of Lynchburg, Va., and First Assembly of God in Phoenix.

Other Southern Baptist churches on the 100-largest list and their attendance figures are:

First Church of Jacksonville, Fla., 7,000; First Church of Dallas, 6,750; Bellevue Church of Memphis, Tenn., 6,500; First Church of Orlando, Fla., 5,300; First Church of Houston, 5,035; First Church of Atlanta, 5,000; Trinity Church of San Antonio, Texas, 4,500; Prestonwood Church of Dallas, 4,038; First Church of Euless, Texas, 4,000;

First Church of Jackson, Miss., 4,000; Saddleback Valley Community Church of Mission Viejo, Calif., 4,000; First Church of Gonzales, Texas,

3,850; Champion Forest Church of Houston, 3,750;

McGregor Church of Fort Myers, Fla., 3,700; First Church of West Palm Beach, Fla., 3,550; Loveland Missionary Church of Fontana, Calif., 3,400; Roswell Street Church of Marietta, Ga., 3,200.

Vaughan's list of the fastest-growing churches in America is based upon net gain in worship attendance from 1989 to 1990 — not upon percentage growth.

On this list Saddleback Valley Community Church of Mission Viejo, Calif., ranks fourth with a net gain of 1,345. First Church of Jacksonville, Fla., ranks fifth with a net gain of 1,213.

The three fastest growing churches of any affiliation are Calvary Chapel

(See **FIRST, JACKSON** on page 5)

Foreign Board appoints three couples with Mississippi ties

Three Mississippi couples were among 31 named as missionaries by the Foreign Mission Board, SBC, on Dec. 11 at First Church, Charlottesville, Va.

Lawrence and Gail Osbrink will live in Senegal, where he will start and develop churches and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1989 he has been associate pastor at North Hialeah Church, Hialeah, Fla. Born and reared in Miami, Fla., he received the bachelor of science in business administration degree from Mississippi College and

the master of divinity in Christian education degree from Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Born in Moses Lake, Wash., Mrs. Osbrink, the former Gail McDaris, considers Raleigh, N.C. her hometown. She received the bachelor of social work degree from the University of Georgia and the master of arts degree from Southern Seminary.

The Osbrinks have two children: Lydia Elyse, born in 1989; and Jordan Luke, 1990.

Wayne and Florence Frederick were reappointed. They will live in

France, where he will start and develop churches and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries. Since 1986 he has been pastor of Jericho Church, Baldwin, Miss. Before that they were missionaries in the French West Indies for 16 years.

Born in Shannon, Miss., Frederick received the associate of arts degree from Itawamba Community College in Fulton; the bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College; and the bachelor of divinity and master of religious education degrees from New

(See **COUPLES** on page 5)

Open letter to Southern Baptists

All my life I have been told that prayer makes the difference, but when I actually experienced an outpouring of prayer from thousands of Christians around the world that were praying specifically for me and my situation, it made the difference in survival.

A day did not go by in the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait that I was not aware that thousands of Baptists were praying specifically for me and my family. There were days I was frightened for my physical well-being and uncertain about how well my wife and children were coping back home without me. What made the difference is knowing that people were holding us up in prayer and I knew that God would respond to their heartfelt petitions.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to serve as one of your missionaries in God's work in his kingdom. Knowing that prayer makes a difference, I ask you to continue to pray for the hundreds of thousands of Americans in the Middle East who are serving their country — that they will have a positive Christian witness in the most closed country for sharing the Gospel.

My other prayer concern is for the five lay leaders who I left in charge of the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait to carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ in a hostile, broken country. Pray that they would have the spiritual resources to meet the challenge that God has placed before them.

Sincerely,
Maurice Graham

New writers begin doing Sunday School comments

Three new persons this week begin writing Sunday School lesson commentaries and will continue through June. They are Benny Still, Woodville, Life and Work; Ruth Allen, Jackson, Uniform; and Jerry Vardaman, Starkville, Bible Book.

Benny Still is minister of music and youth at Woodville Church and also is pastor of the Fort Adams Mission. He is a graduate of Cleveland High School, Clarke College, and William Carey College, and has taken extensive courses from the University of Tennessee.

He is married to the former Edwina King. They have two sons, Geoff and Eric. Still sings tenor, baritone, or bass, and can play the piano and organ. His hobbies include sign making, glass etching, composing music, creative writing, and flower gardening.

Ruth Allen, a Florida native, received a B.A. degree from Mississippi College in Bible and social studies. She attended Southwestern Seminary and later did additional studies at Belhaven College, Mississippi State University, and University of Southern Mississippi.

She is married to Judd Allen, pastor of Ogden Church, Benton, who before retirement was consultant in the Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. They have three children, Mrs. Beverly Livingston, Huntsville, Ala.; David J. Allen, Jackson; and Charles E. Allen, Little Rock, Ark.

Mrs. Allen taught Bible and social studies at Jackson Preparatory School, Jackson, from 1970 to 1988. She has also served as director of adult education at Calvary Church,

Jackson; as special worker for the Mississippi Baptist Sunday School Department; and as conference leader at Ridgecrest and Glorieta.

Jerry Vardaman, from 1972 until the present, has had various assignments as acting director, director, and director of special programs, Cobb Institute of Archaeology, Mississippi State University. At the same time, he has been professor of religion at MSU.

Vardaman was a student in high school in Dallas, Texas, until his entry into the U.S. Marine Corps in 1943, where he served three years. His degrees include a bachelor of arts from Baylor University and bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology from Southwestern Seminary.

His earlier jobs included Baptist student director and professor of religion at Tarleton State University; instructor in Biblical Introduction at Southwestern Seminary; and associate professor of Biblical Archaeology at Southern Seminary.

He has studied at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and Pittsburgh-Xenia and at Hebrew Union Arch and Bible School, Jerusalem. He has been director or deputy director of various archaeological expeditions.

He is married to the former Alafene Jolly, who is professor of English at Wood College, Mathiston.

The Vardamans' daughters, Carol Tingle and Celeste Moore, are doctors. Tingle practices at University Hospital, Jackson, and Whitfield; Moore practices at Parkland Hospital, Dallas, Texas, and teaches pathology at Southwestern Medical School, Dallas.

SBC baptisms projected to increase 7.7 percent

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (BP) — Baptisms in Southern Baptist churches for 1990 are projected to be up nearly 8 percent over the previous year — the largest percentage increase in a decade.

Clay Price of the Home Mission Board's research division presented that projection to state evangelism directors during their annual meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz.

The total number of baptisms projected for the year is 378,000, a 7.7 percent increase over the 351,107 baptisms recorded in 1989.

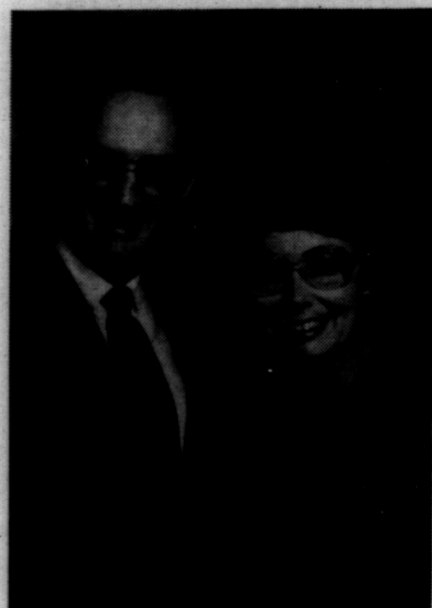
Official statistics on baptisms will be reported by the Sunday School Board early in 1991. Price's estimate is based upon preliminary data provided by state evangelism directors.

The increase in baptisms appears to be a uniform phenomenon across the nation, Price reported.

Evangelism leaders cited several reasons for this year's increase.

One contributing factor was a six-week period of "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals last spring,

(See **BAPTISMS** on page 5)



Fredericks



Bodenheimers



Osbrinks

Vaughn wraps up 38 years

By Tim Nicholas

Chester Vaughn has just wrapped up 38 years of active service to Southern Baptists with the knowledge that "the principles of church work have not changed," he says.

Vaughn, who retired last month as program director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, says, however, the methods have changed and will continue to change. "We have moved from just one way to do something to a multiplicity of approaches," he says.

"Flake's formula (Arthur Flake, a Mississippian who articulated the principle for church growth) is as sound today as the day he enunciated it: 'Discover your possibilities, enlarge the organization, enlist and train workers, provide the space, and go after the people.'"

He says that over the years, enlargement and training have been his favorite part of the work. And he worked in a variety of situations since he first felt God's call into Christian education while a manager for Western Union.

While earning college and seminary degrees and afterward, Vaughn worked in a county seat church, an urban church in a metropolitan area, and a city First Baptist. And he worked for the Baptist Sunday School Board as a Sunday School administration consultant before coming to the MBCB nearly 16 years ago.

Earl Kelly, retired executive director of the MBCB, called Vaughn to the

MBCB from the Sunday School Board after studying other conventions' organizational processes. Vaughn came to manage church programs related to the work of the Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Woman's Missionary Union.

Vaughn says that "how we do church in the future probably will radically change and the great need is to be guided by the basic principles into new arenas." He says if there is deviation, it needs to be done from a solid base.

For Mississippi's future, Vaughn has some ideas. He suggests that the merger of smaller and weaker churches and associations would make them more effective.

For instance, he believes that church programming seems to do better in churches after they reach a certain size. A number of churches in Mississippi only have about 25 members, he says. "You really need more than that today to have the dynamic church that reaches the masses of people."

Vaughn also believes the future holds greater opportunities in the black mission field. "Mississippi has the opportunity to help strengthen National Baptist churches as well as establishing black Southern Baptist churches," says Vaughn, "as the felt need is experienced and as areas decide to do something in that direction."

The other trend Vaughn sees is related to bivocational work in Christian education. "I want to bring to the surface the concept of a bivocational educational worker," he says. There are about 500 each of bivocational pastors and music directors.

"Probably you could count the number of bivocational education workers on both hands."

He said, however, "every church needs to strengthen its educational program." He says that many smaller churches could give consideration to employing someone from their own membership who has leadership gifts in education and who could be trained by the state convention to provide educational guidance for a multitude of smaller churches.

Vaughn himself will probably offer himself for helping guide groups of smaller churches in educational work.

And, after enjoying some time off, he will travel with his wife Evelyn, such as to Ridgecrest where she will lead Sunday School conferences. "She is a committed children's worker," says Vaughn of his wife. "She has written for Southern Baptist curriculum materials every year since 1968."

Vaughn enters retirement "with a very good feeling, a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment." He says he's been happy everywhere he's served and has never had a bitter experience along the way "for which I am grateful to the Lord."



Eddie Hamilton, right, president, Mississippi Baptist Convention, presents a plaque of appreciation to Chester Vaughn for his 16 years of service as program director, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The presentation took place at a retirement dinner Dec. 6 given by the Convention Board for Vaughn and Don McGregor, retiring editor, *Baptist Record*. At left is Vaughn's wife, Evelyn, who has written Southern Baptist curriculum materials every year since 1968.

Soul winning encounter announced

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (BP) — Southern Baptists will get a second chance to tell America, "Here's Hope."

A national soul winning encounter slated for 1995 will carry the same theme as the denomination's 1990 simultaneous revivals: "Here's Hope. Jesus cares for you."

Internal publicity for the year-long emphasis will carry a slightly different theme: "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now."

Rather than emphasizing only simultaneous revivals, the 1995 em-

phasis will expand to include personal evangelism leading up to simultaneous revivals.

The national soul winning encounter will consist of two phases — 60 days of personal evangelism and six months of "harvest revivals."

The HMB will enlist 1.5 million people who will commit to witness to one person each day between Jan. 8 and March 9, 1995. Those 60 days of personal evangelism will be followed by a nationwide emphasis on revivals between March 12 and Sept. 30.

Legislative report . . .

Latest bills listed

By Paul Jones

The 1991 Mississippi Legislative Session will begin on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 1991. This session of the Legislature will focus on key issues that will impact all citizens of the state. The legislators can be reached in their home districts on the weekends and at the state Capitol during the session. Persons wishing to communicate with their legislators may do so by writing them at Box 1018, Jackson, MS 39215 or calling them at 359-3770.

A number of significant bills have already been prefiled for early consideration by the Legislature. Immediate citizen input is the key to preventing a bad bill from becoming law and in assisting with the passage of desirable legislation. By topics, the following bills have already been introduced.

ABORTION

House Bill (HB) 112 would prohibit public employees from participating in certain abortions. This would make most abortions in public facilities unfeasible.

HB 113 would prohibit the use of public funds for abortions.

HB 114 would prohibit the use of public facilities for abortions.

ALCOHOL

HB 50 and HB 51 would allow out-of-state DUI convictions to count for enhanced penalties under state DUI conviction. This could be an incentive to keep drunk drivers off the highways.

HB 129 would allow for the sale of certain out-of-state wines.

HB 130 would abolish authority of State Tax Commission as exclusive liquor wholesaler.

HB 204 would allow liquor stores to sell party goods. The limited focus provided by the state alcohol beverage laws would be expanded so liquor stores could compete with stores which sell party items but stores selling party items could not compete with liquor stores.

Senate Bill (SB) 2023 would establish the Alcohol Boating Safety Act.

CHILDREN

HB 85 would provide criminal penalties for failure to report neglected or abused children. This could put teeth into the Mandated Reporting Act.

HB 86 would provide for registration with law enforcement of all sex offenders.

HB 89 would increase the penalty for selling tobacco to minors.

DRUGS

HB 84 would not allow for a suspended sentence or parole for a person convicted of selling drugs to a minor. In essence, sell to a kid, and go to jail, period.

SB 2092 and SB 2104 would establish the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1991.

EDUCATION

HB 88 would prohibit weapons on public school premises.

SB 2166 would require phonics as teaching technique in grades K-3.

ENVIRONMENT

HB 21 would create the Mississippi

Recycling Act. The need to be more environmentally responsible could refocus attention on what it means to be earth stewards.

GAMBLING

HCR 6 would amend the constitution to authorize a state lottery. This is another attempt to make what has been illegal and criminal for 100 years legal so special interests from out-of-state can profit from the misfortune of citizens of the state.

HCR 8 would amend the constitution to declare that bingo shall not be illegal.

HB 74 would redefine organizations authorized to conduct bingo and raffles.

HB 125 would establish the Video Card Machine Control Law of 1991. This is part of the mechanism to legalize video poker and to use whatever proceeds to fund public education.

HB 139 would prescribe license taxes and fees for video card machines. This is part of the mechanism to supposedly raise funds for education while in fact making the equipment providers in other states the real winners.

SB 2163 would tax bingo operations.

GOVERNMENT

HB 1 would reduce the size of the state Legislature in an attempt to reduce state expenditures.

HB 22 would provide for a referen-

(See **LATEST BILLS** on page 8)

Panola sponsors "cult blitz"

On Nov. 4-5, Panola Association, in conjunction with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, shared information and provided training for the purpose of witnessing to the members of six different cult groups. A total of 17 speakers spoke in 18 churches on Nov. 4, on the subject of Islam, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, the Occult, the New Age, and the Unification Church. Four churches used all four time slots (Sunday School, morning worship, Discipleship Training, and evening worship) for the "Cult Blitz."

There were 2,396 conferees who received training on Sunday. The Courtland Church hosted the noon luncheon for conference leaders and those who provided transportation.

First Church, Sardis, was the host church for the Five Awareness Conferences held on Nov. 5 from 7-9 p.m. Conferees attending totaled 61 making a total of 2,457 conferees for the "Cult Blitz." One of the conferees was Jack Thorne, a member of the Church of England, whose home is Bedford, England, the city of John Bunyan. Thorne was visiting J. D. Joslin, a cousin and pastor of Pharsalia.

Conference leaders reported the existence of a high level of excitement. "Rapt attention" was the way Eddie Prince characterized the response of the participants. "The best participation by our churches in any event other than a World Mission Conference," said Walter Ballard, director of missions.



These were the leaders of an interfaith witness blitz in Panola Association. From left, they are (front row) Ira Alley, Memorie Alley, Tillie Gullett, Eunice Bryant, and Ann Huber; (second row) Jerald Welch, Wayne Gullett, Lavon Hatten, Hollis Bryant, and Don Sorrels; (back row) Rickey McKay, Walter Ballard, Wade Allen, and Lamar Shirley.

Evangelism, Sunday School called basics to growth

Part 4 of 6
By Mark Wingfield

ATLANTA (BP) — Once a church and its pastor renew their vision for ministry, the road to growth is paved with hard work, church growth specialists say.

Research shows churches which grow off the plateau don't usually do anything extraordinary, they just do the basics better and harder.

The first step to growing off a plateau is to renew vision and pastoral leadership, according to Kirk Hadaway of the Sunday School Board and Jere Allen of the Home Mission Board.

Beyond that, there are a variety of ingredients commonly found in breakout churches:

— Evangelism. "If breakout churches do any one thing better than plateaued churches, that thing would be evangelism and outreach," Hadaway said. "Most churches talk about it, but breakout churches do it."

This renewed concern with evangelism usually includes an emphasis on spiritual growth and prayer, he found. "We are not dealing with quick fixes instituted by fly-by-night evangelists. The renewal which takes place tends to produce a well-rounded church with a rare mix of evangelism, spirituality and social concern."

Joe Finrock, pastor of First Church in Gentry, Ark., said his church has baptized 400 people in five years with a basic approach to evangelism. "I believe the pastor has to be willing to set the example in personal soul winning," he said. "He must encourage people that they can win others to Christ."

Using this approach, the rural Arkansas church has grown from 100

to nearly 400 in average Sunday attendance.

— Sunday School. Hadaway's research shows that breakout churches also tend to have better Sunday School programs than churches which remain on a plateau.

"We just came back and did nuts and bolts Sunday School," pastor Anthony Jordan says of the growth at Northwest Church in Oklahoma City. In eight years the church has grown from an average Sunday attendance of 690 to 1,000 despite its location in a transitional neighborhood.

This is a key element of a joint commitment of the Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board in fostering church growth, said Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder.

"We are committed to sound, holistic church growth," he contended. "Churches reach people most effectively through the Sunday School. They receive personal contacts and ministry. The Sunday School program is our point of thrust onto the mission field of our communities."

In rural Franklin, Ky., pastor Steve Curtis has proved that concept true. By emphasizing Sunday School, the church has grown from an average attendance of 50 to nearly 450.

"I tell my folks I'd rather they come to Sunday School than come to preaching," Curtis says. "We now have 30 people coming to Sunday School on a regular basis who are lost. That is our evangelistic base."

— Positive worship experience. Worship services in breakout churches have a different character than worship services in plateaued churches, Hadaway discovered.

In breakout churches, worship is more often described as "celebration" and includes variety, spontaneity, and informality. "Growing churches tend to be flexible," Hadaway said. "They often change things from week to week and are not upset when the worship service does not happen exactly as stated in the order of service."

This finding is affirmed by Dan Yearly, pastor of University Church in Coral Gables, Fla., which has grown from 300 to 1,300. "I believe in a very positive worship experience. I believe in the gospel of affirmation. You don't browbeat people into action."

"I preach about sin, but always couched in grace. I never saw anybody scared or fought into the kingdom of God. They're loved into the kingdom."

— Goal-setting. "Stagnant churches keep doing the same things year after year because the programs have always been done," Hadaway found. On the other hand, breakout churches report an increased emphasis on strategy-planning and goal-setting.

Curtis attributes much of his congregation's increase to goal setting. Although located on a rural highway seven miles from the nearest town, Providence Church has set a goal of averaging 1,000 in attendance by the year 2000.

When asked if that goal might be unrealistic, the pastor quickly replies, "We're almost halfway there already."

— View toward the future rather than the past. Church growth author Lyle Schaller says he can gauge a church's growth by asking this question: "What is the one event that everyone in the church recalls and says, 'Ever since then, we've never been the same?'"

Growing churches have dreamed a new dream and don't constantly look to landmarks in the past, he says.

Jordan found that to be true at Northwest Church in Oklahoma City, where fire destroyed the church building in 1965.

"When I came here in 1982, everything was dated by the fire. If you would talk to our people they would talk about the fire," he said. "Today they wouldn't be talking about the fire. They have redreamed the dream."

— Laity deployed in ministry. Too often churches get caught up in the process of doing church to the point of not doing anything at all, noted Charles Chaney of the Home Mission Board.

"Our people have so many hours a week they can give. If we have them in committee meetings a couple of nights a week, they have no time for outreach," he said.

As an example of where this leads, Chaney told about a church council meeting he once attended where more than an hour was devoted to discussing how to keep one Sunday School class from using crayons that belonged to another class.

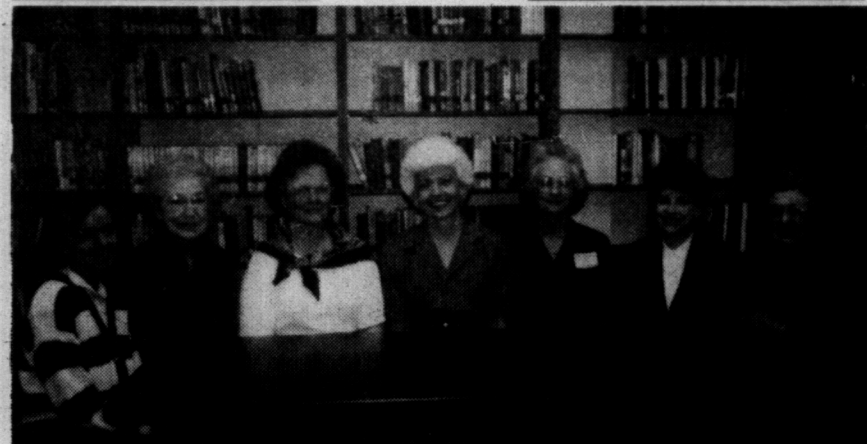
— Perseverance. "Don't get discouraged when some things don't work," cautioned pastor Gary Baldwin of Westport Church in Denver, N.C. Westport Church grew off a plateau of about 100 people to average more than 300 currently.

"We try 90 things, and maybe one of them works," adds pastor Jim Summers of Northwest Church in Miami, which has grown from an average attendance of 260 to 1,100.

Wingfield writes for HMB.

Thursday, January 3, 1991

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Church librarians elect officers

The state's Church Media Library Organization in its annual meeting in November elected officers for 1990-91. Left to right are Sharon Neff, Arcola, president; Agatha Sandidge, Brookhaven, vice president; Nancy Hughes, Hattiesburg, program chairman; Joan Beasley, Wesson, historian; Faye Miller, Hattiesburg, TACMO representative; Sandra Fitts, Corinth, ex-officio; Juanita Hight, Louisville, publicity chairman; and Joan Davis, Madison, secretary-treasurer (not pictured). The librarians will meet Nov. 1-2, 1991, at First Church, Hattiesburg.

The Baptist Hour celebrates broadcasting milestone

It was Jan. 5, 1941, before many Americans had heard of television, that Southern Baptists began their radio ministry. The dominant American entertainment medium was radio. People who could not afford the price of a movie theater ticket could crowd around the radio.

It was in that milieu that an Atlanta pastor, Sam Lowe, saw his dream of more than a decade become a reality. It happened on Jan. 5, 1941, when M. E. Dodd, pastor of First Church, Shreveport, La., stepped to the microphone and broadcast over 17 stations in 11 states. This launched Southern Baptists into a 50-year involvement in religious broadcasting. The Baptist Hour is aired weekly on 450 radio stations nationwide and broadcast on the Armed Forces Network.

It is one of the longest-running denominational radio programs in history. In early years, The Baptist Hour was broadcast live. The Baptist Hour, the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission's flagship radio program, has received a Gold Angel award from Religion in Media, a non-profit Los Angeles organization founded with the purpose of improving the media.

The Gold Angel award honors productions that are deemed to have high spiritual, moral, or social impact on society.

The RTVC's Gold Angel will be on display at First Church, Shreveport, La., on Sunday, Jan. 6. On that date, a six-month long anniversary celebration of the Baptist Hour will be launched at the Shreveport church, where the first Baptist Hour sermon was preached in January 1941 by M.E. Dodd.

Herschel H. Hobbs, who served as Baptist Hour speaker for 18 years, will deliver the 50th anniversary message, which will be carried live by satellite on the ACTS (American Christian Television System) network and recorded for distribution to radio stations that broadcast the program.

COUPLES

From page 3

Orleans Seminary.

Born in New Orleans and reared in Edwards, Mrs. Frederick, the former Florence Blush, received the bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College.

The Fredericks, who have four grown children, will leave for the field in February.

David and Lynda Bodenheimer will work as representatives in Hungary, where he will be a religious education promoter and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1986 he has been minister of education and family activities at Signal Mountain (Tenn.) Church.

Born in Winston-Salem, N.C., he received the bachelor of science degree from Wake Forest University

and the master of arts in religious education degree from Southwestern Seminary.

He has been a Foreign Mission Board journeyman in Peru; youth intern at James Avenue Church in Fort Worth; and a Centrifuge staffer in Mobile.

Born and reared in Tupelo, Mrs. Bodenheimer, the former Lynda Sneed, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Byron Sneed of that city.

She received the bachelor of arts degree from the University of Mississippi and the master of arts in religious education degree from Southwestern Seminary.

She has been a Centrifuge staffer in Mobile and a summer missionary in Wyoming.

The Bodenheimers and Osbrinks will go to Rockville, Va., in January for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.

FIRST, JACKSON

From page 3

in Albuquerque, N.M., Mount Ephraim Church in Atlanta, and Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill.

Other SBC churches on the fastest-growing list and their net gain in worship attendance are:

East Brent Church of Pensacola, Fla., 940; Sunnycrest Church of Marion, Ind., 700; Second Church of Houston, 635; San Jacinto Church of Amarillo, Texas, 600; Hyde Park Church of Austin, Texas, 600; First Church of Woodstock, Ga., 500; First Church of Merritt Island, Fla., 500; Woodland Park Church of Chat-

tanooga, Tenn., 500; Hoffmantown Church of Albuquerque, N.M., 457; First Church of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 450;

First Church of Midland, Texas, 438; Trinity Church of San Antonio, Texas, 400; Casas Adobes Church of Tucson, Ariz., 400; Hickory Grove Church of Charlotte, N.C., 400; McGregor Church of Fort Myers, Fla., 400; Rehobeth Church of Atlanta, 350; First Church of Moore, Okla., 350; Lake Pointe Church of Rowlett, Texas, 346; First Church of Broken Arrow, Okla., 300; Smoke Rise Church of Atlanta, 300; First Church of Snellville, Ga., 300; Roswell Street Church of Marietta, Ga., 300; Metropolitan Church of Houston, 300.

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Status quo: analysis of "mess we're in"

By Herschel H. Hobbs

Someone defined status quo as Latin for the mess we are in. I want to apply it to the current situation in the Southern Baptist Convention. My only qualification to do this is age and experience. I hope the fact that I am the oldest living former president of the Southern Baptist Convention may give me the right to write this article. To borrow from "Mammy Yokum" of Dogpatch, if I had my druthers I would like to sit on the sideline, bask in past history, and cheer on a new generation running the race that is set before them. But I can no longer remain silent. So I trust that you will bear with me, my dear friends of our beloved Convention.

When I was a young pastor I sat for hours at a time listening to such greats as Louie D. Newton and John Jeter Hurt, Sr., as they recited history of which I had read but in which they participated in the making. It linked me to the past and prepared me for the future. I cannot hold a candle to them, but hopefully I can help others as they helped me.

At the outset, let me say that I am not on either side in the present controversy. Both sides have some right and some wrong. Through 83 years of living I have learned a few things. One is that extremes are never right. The truth lies somewhere between them. Another is that in every difference there are three sides: yours, mine, and the right one. The right one is God's side, and we must find it!

Furthermore, what I will say is not criticism of the present generation, but of mine. Most of them are gone or else are no longer in the mainstream of convention activities. But the roots of the present controversy are in the soil of our generation.

In the seminary my generation majored on Hebrew, Greek, theology, and homiletics. We studied psychology, counseling, and pastoral ministries. But they were minors over against the majors. In theology, for instance, we were taught Southern Baptist systematic theology. I fear that today's graduates know systematic theology in the broader sense. But I also fear that they do not know Southern Baptist systematic theology. One veteran theology professor agreed with me that my fears are true. These men know more about Barth, Bruner, Bultmann, and Tillich than they do about Mullins and Connor. It is not their fault. They were victims of decisions made by people of my generation in the late 1940s.

My generation was thoroughly indoctrinated in what is generally accepted as Southern Baptist heritage and faith. I realize that with some, academic indoctrination is a dirty word. But it simply means teaching in a certain way. Southern Baptists have six fine seminaries. They were established and are financed for the purpose of training leaders for Southern Baptist churches and other institutions. People of other faiths are welcomed, but these schools do not exist for them. How can we train Southern Baptist leaders without teaching them our heritage and faith? I know that we should teach them to think for themselves. But we owe it to them to guide young minds into the right paths.

The result of all this is that we now have a generation, the greater part of which does not know our Baptist heritage and faith. This applies to both sides of our controversy.

Furthermore, my generation let the old Baptist Training Union die. We lost four months out of the year when our people studied our Southern Baptist heritage and faith. The result is that we have a sad lack concerning

these matters in both the pulpit and the pew. Ask the average Southern Baptist what he/she believes, and the answer most likely will be, "I believe what Southern Baptists believe." If asked what they believe they will say, "I don't know. But I sure believe it!"

We hear cries of creedalism and academic freedom. For 27 years I have warned Southern Baptists that if we ignore the preamble of The Baptist Faith and Message we make it a creed. This preamble protects the individual conscience and guards against a creedal faith. But it also states clearly that Southern Baptists have been and are now identified with certain basic beliefs set forth in that document.

The preamble is as much a part of The Baptist Faith and Message as any of the 17 articles in it. Without the preamble the Convention would not have adopted the Statement. Therefore, no Southern Baptist or group of such should try to enforce the 17 articles while ignoring the provisions of the preamble.

As for academic freedom, there is no such thing as absolute freedom where people live in community. Because my freedom is limited by your rights. I am free to do calisthenics, to double up my fists and thrust my arms back and forth. But I am not free to do that on a crowded street corner where in doing it I punch you in the nose. My individual freedom ends where your nose begins. Freedom and responsibility go hand in hand, else the results is anarchy.

In academia this freedom is limited by the purpose for which the school exists — whether it be a seminary or a state university. At the same time we should remember that a seminary is not a university. Which means that its purpose of being is different from a university. As previously stated, a denominational seminary is limited by its peculiar purpose.

In my president's address in San Francisco in 1962 I sought to distinguish between a creedal and a living faith. I used the figure of two ways to graze a cow. A creedal faith is snubbing the cow to a post, allowing only limited grazing. A living faith is like building a fence about a piece of land. The cow is free to graze anywhere within that fence. In our figure the fence is the Bible and the purpose of the institutions.

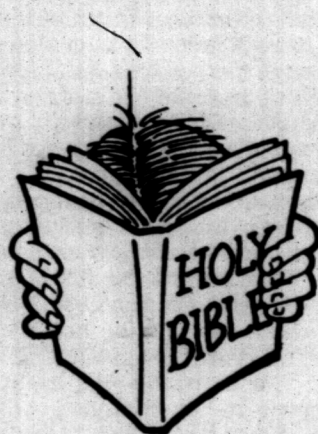
In recent years a new word has been introduced into Southern Baptist theology — parameters. This refers to limits to our faith or the teaching/preaching of it. These parameters should not be so narrow as to stifle sound intellectual pursuits. But they should not be so broad as to have no limits beyond which one can go. It all comes down to freedom with responsibility. The Baptist Faith and Message could well be the guide here.

Now let us look at the Peace Committee. It was carefully chosen so as to be a balanced group involving both extremes with a middle section to balance between the conservatives and the moderates. (I do not like labels, but we seem to be stuck with them. Toward the end of the second year of the Peace Committee's work a leading conservative agreed with me that these terms are not theological, but political.) I have served on more SBC committees than I can remember. Never have I served on one which was more important or more conscientious in its work. Of course we had our differences, but we spoke the truth in love. Near the end of the second year a leading conservative said that if the spirit that developed in that committee could

develop in the entire Convention, our problem would be solved.

Every word spoken in all our meetings, including stale jokes, was recorded on tape. The committee voted unanimously to seal the tapes for 10 years. This was done so that committee members would speak more freely. Near the end of our work it was evident that they contained nothing that was world-shaking. Three attempts were made to rescind the vote to seal them. The chairman rightly ruled that it must be by unanimous vote. We always had two or three negative votes.

We were instructed by the Convention to determine the source of the controversy, report our findings, and make recommendations. We soon decided that the source was theology which produced the politics. We then divided into sub-committees to visit the various agencies of the Convention. Our purpose was to discuss theological problems as reflected in our mail. Reports to the Peace Committee revealed problems in only two seminaries, and they were being handled through proper channels by those institutions.



Then a sub-committee on politics was appointed. I was on that committee. On a scheduled basis we met with everyone who could have been involved in such. Suffice to say that it is quite evident that denominational politics are involved — on both sides. It began with the conservatives but rather involved moderates as well. As for giving our ballots indiscriminately we found no documented evidence.

Let one example suffice. It was reported to Lee Porter and Ted Hedquist that two Criswell Bible Institute students were giving out ballots at a certain entrance. Hedquist literally ran to that entrance, hoping that if it were true he would catch them in the act. Arriving, he found two nicely dressed young men. They had no ballots. They were not Criswell Bible Institute students. They were wearing stickers given out that day at the Southeastern Seminary luncheon.

With proper people we went into the matter of seminary faculty purges, only to find that they were baseless. One man, who according to rumors was one possibility for president of Golden Gate, said, "Present problems are the responsibility of the president and trustees. Through the process of attrition — resignation, retirement, death — I would replace them with people who believe as I do." That involves a generation, not an overnight purge!

On the basis of my service on this sub-committee, my honest conviction is that, with the exception of committee appointments, the things that have kept our Convention in a stir are

based upon rumors which have no basis of fact. I use two examples.

Rumor said that if the conservatives got control of the Foreign Mission Board they would fire Keith Parks and all missionaries who did not adhere to their beliefs, and change our whole concept of foreign missions. Fact: In October 1989 the board appointed a committee to draw up a statement. At the Board's December meeting it was adopted unanimously — endorsing without reservation both Parks, all missionaries, and our entire foreign mission program.

Another rumor: If this group gets control of the seminaries' trustee boards, they will change them into Bible schools. Fact: Look at Mid-America. It is their school; they founded and finance it. It is exactly what they want. It is accredited by the same AATS which accredits our six seminaries. And they do not accredit Bible schools!

The Peace Committee has been criticized for its timing in presenting its report to the Convention. Of course, it is to be regretted. When we first began meeting we set our target date as April 1 so that it could be in the Book of Reports. We were on schedule. The committee to write the report had been appointed. We said something must happen to give them something on which to base the report. In fact, we had a long prayer session to that end.

It happened at the Glorieta Prayer Retreat when the seminary presidents brought the "Glorieta Statement." In turn, then President Adrian Rogers issued his statement. Ironically when these were printed in the state papers, some moderates said the presidents were pressured into making their statement. One strong conservative said that Rogers had "sold out to the moderates." Neither was true! But the committee was ready to begin writing its report.

Our next meeting was early in November. In the meantime a story appeared in the state papers quoting one seminary president as if he were drawing back from the Glorieta statement. The sub-committee to write the report met a day early to begin writing the report. But it agreed this matter must be resolved before they could write it. When the full Peace Committee met there was agreement to that effect. Investigation revealed that this president had been quoted out of context. Not deliberately, but it delayed us two months — the exact time we were late according to our original schedule.

Some criticized its being presented at 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday. That time was set by the committee on order of business, not by the Peace Committee. In any case it was adopted by an estimated vote of 96 to 4.

The first unanimous decision made by the Peace Committee was that if anyone proposed that we serve beyond the allotted two years, all of us would shoot him. But as we neared the end of that period it became evident that some committee should be responsible for reporting to the Convention as to the response given to the Convention's action. For the sake of continuity it was agreed that two members of that committee should be from our committee. Finally, it was agreed that the Peace Committee knew more about the situation than any other group. Hence the recommendation that for that purpose we be continued for one more year. The morning after our report was adopted a press interview quoted a "moderate" as calling us a "police committee." Nothing could have been farther from the truth!

In our one authorized meeting the third year we spent a day and a half hearing reports from agency heads and the chairmen of their boards. Without exception all reports were positive; all agencies were abiding by the Convention's action. In the one agency where there had been problems, the president spoke of the future rather than the past. So much so that one leading "conservative" said, "Mr. Chairman, we can say that our theological problems are behind us. Our problem now is politics."

After the Convention's adoption of our report in St. Louis I just happened to run into all seminary presidents except Russell Dilday. To each I put the question as to what they thought of our report. Each said, "There is nothing in it with which we cannot live." The agencies are doing just that. But insofar as the contending parties are concerned, in all my years of involvement in Convention life (since 1938) I have never known of a Convention action which has been so ignored and violated as the Peace Committee report!

I was asked if I thought this Convention action would bring peace. I replied, "It will bring peace if they want peace. If the contending parties do not want peace God Himself cannot present a report that will bring peace." Indeed, God has given us His report in the New Testament, but even it is ignored. The contending parties say that they are champions of truth. But I fear that they do not speak the "truth in love."

I heard one "moderate" who said that the Peace Committee gave the "conservatives" everything they wanted. But he did not know what the "conservatives" wanted — or the "moderates" for that matter. Since this change involved the "conservatives" let me give one example to the contrary.

In next to the last meeting before the Peace Committee report, a "conservative" proposed that we place in "Findings" the statement that most Southern Baptists believed the Bible has "truth without any mixture of error for its matter" — including the four examples. Frankly, I preferred not to use the examples. But in mediation you give to get. So I voted to include that statement. After all, that is what we found. And it included Southern Baptists as a whole.

In the final all-night meeting, 30 minutes before we voted unanimously to adopt our report, it was suggested by a "conservative" that this be moved from "Findings" to "Recommendations." I said, "No, sir! I voted to put it in findings. If you put it in recommendations, I want to be recorded as voting against both motions."

One "conservative" said, "If it is true where it is, we should have the guts to put it in recommendations." I replied, "It is not a matter of 'guts' but of 'brains.' Where it is it is a finding. If we move it to recommendations, it becomes creedal." The matter was dropped.

In light of all I have said thus far, I rush in where angels fear to tread. I dare to make some suggestions.

First, I commend President Morris Chapman for calling on all Southern Baptists to make a careful study of the Peace Committee report. Determine for yourself what it says, not what someone else says that it says. I would add that you read the preamble of The Baptist Faith and Message.

Second, on both sides of the controversy, immediately stop the politics and use of inflammatory language.

(See STATUS QUO on page 8)

Thursday, January 3, 1991

STRATEGIC TIMES

Christians behind bars again in the Soviet Union

But now it's for a different reason

By Dan Wooding

In his latest column, Dan Wooding looks at the amazing turnaround in the Soviet Union where, after 70 years of persecution, Christians are not only no longer imprisoned for their faith, but are now actually being asked by the Soviet authorities to take the gospel message "behind bars."

Tears welled up in the eyes of the women prisoners in a Latvian women's prison as the Christian gardener moved among them handing out a daffodil to each inmate. This moving scene took place as part of a remarkable evangelical outreach that has been encouraged by the Ministry of the Interior in Latvia.

A Soviet journalist described the incident in this way: "Afterwards the women told me that this flower, even more than the words accompanying the gesture, had moved them. Many of them had never in their lives received such a gift. And, they went on, even though they did not yet understand many of the words which passed over them yet the feeling of warmth and love remained. This light remaining in the soul could not be confused with anything else."

The "flower power" gift was followed by the beautiful singing of a Baptist choir. On a second visit, the visitors held a service of worship, prayers, and a question and answer session, where everyone observed a great openness to the Word of God.

It wasn't long ago when Christians were being imprisoned — now they are going behind bars to present the gospel — with the full support of Soviet authorities.

The fact that Christians are now being actively encouraged to take the gospel into Soviet prisons by government authorities is revealed by Michael Bourdeaux, founder of Keston College, in his new book, *Gorbachev, Glasnost, And The Gospel* (Hodder and Stoughton, England.)

Describing the visit to the Latvian women's prison, Bourdeaux wrote, "Not all were total strangers to the faith: some had been brought up in it, but had subsequently abandoned it. There were those who requested prayers for them in their own local churches. The prison officials later testified to such an improvement in the outlook and behavior of the inmates that they wanted to establish these services as a regular event."

Similar initiatives are being undertaken, not just in the Baltic States, but also by Baptists in Ukraine. Young Baptists visited the Berezansky corrective labor colony for the first time on Aug. 13, and conducted a service of songs, readings, prayers, and a sermon by a man who had himself sat behind bars more than once for his religious faith. Such was the impact of this visit on at least one of the inmates that he sent a letter of thanks to those who had taken part in the service.

"In Riga the main Protestant denominations have come together to form a 'Latvian Christian Mission,' the principal aims of which are social initiatives and evangelism," writes Bourdeaux. "They list prison work as one of the objectives."

One of the new evangelical Christian publications printed a remarkable article three months later entitled, "Within the prison gates," continuing the story of The Latvian Christian Mission, says Bourdeaux.

"The 'boldness' of the officials of the Ministry of the Interior in Latvia has given Christians the opportunity to preach the gospel in prisons and to distribute Christian literature," he added.

An evidence of the new policy was when Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev was able to visit a strict regime prison camp at Bucha, near Kiev in the Ukraine on July 19, 1989. This was the first time in 70 years that a priest had visited a labor camp without being one of the inmates.

"The director of the local soviet had come to the conclusion that the camp system, despite tireless propaganda to the contrary, had done very little to re-educate criminal offenders and it was time for a new and more 'human' approach," wrote Bourdeaux. "This was the motivation behind the recent decision to introduce parole as a reward for good behavior; (and for) allowing Christians access to the camp to improve morale and conduct."

Metropolitan Filaret spoke to a gathering of 700 prisoners and the public address system relayed his message to anyone who was not there in person. The Moscow News reported that the prisoners were receptive to the message. One said that, if the church could help bring about a reconciliation between criminals and the society from which they are outlawed, he at least would be prepared to try and put the Ten Commandments into practice.

As a result of the Orthodox leader's visit, prisoners are now permitted to wear crosses around their necks, an offense until recently punishable by solitary confinement. Also the camp governor promised that any Christian literature which the Metropolitan had brought would be available to the prisoners without restrictions and a room would be made available where a priest could administer communion.

What an incredible turn around! A decade which began with evangelists such as Valeri Barinov, the Leningrad rock musician, being sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison for producing a Christian rock album called *The Trumpet Call*, and which had ended with the state actually encouraging the church to give priority to taking the gospel behind bars.

In the challenging world of perestroika there are few more dramatic examples of official about-face.

Dan Wooding is an award-winning journalist now living in Southern California where he is the founder and international director of ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times), based in Pasadena. He was born in Nigeria of British missionary parents and is the author of 23 books. He is also a commentator for the UPI Radio Network.



Women in prison — Olga Petrova, right, a member of the Moscow Baptist Church, says goodbye to Natasha, a prisoner at the Mozhaik Women's Prison outside Moscow. Natasha became a Christian after church people started visiting the prison. Petrova, active in her church's charity ministry, has visited the prison a number of times and she and Natasha are good friends. (FMB Photo By Don Rutledge)



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



"... come before winter"

January has arrived. It's winter-time, 1991. I've brought my potted plants indoors. We've restocked the woodpile, for toasting our toes by the fireside on long cold evenings.

But as I think back on a message I heard Bobby Perry, Gulf Coast director of missions, deliver to a group of Campers on Mission, I wonder if there are other items I should give my close attention, now before another real cold spell . . .

He read from Paul's second letter to Timothy, written from a Roman prison: "The time of my departure is at hand . . . Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me . . . Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee . . . The cloak that I left, bring with you, and the books, but especially the parchments . . . Do thy diligence to come before winter."

Do you suppose that Timothy got there with the cherished books and the warm cloak, before winter? Or did he arrive the next spring and find that Paul had already been executed? Perry helped us to imagine what it might have been like if Timothy happened to delay too long and did not arrive before winter. With the admonition, "Come before winter," he reminded us of some important things we ought to do now, and not put off until it's too late. I'll not use his exact words, but will try to convey the idea, for it struck a deep chord of response in me.

If there are persons you want to tell how much they have meant to you and to express appreciation for their impact on your life, do it now, he insisted. "Come before winter."

The week before I heard him speak, Perry had visited his hometown in Alabama, seen many faces from the days of his youth, and been reminded of the debt he owed to many of those

people. As he reminisced, I recalled quite a few to whom I had not said, "Thank you for giving me a lift when I needed it." In October I had traveled one Saturday to the "Ridge Grove reunion." Though Ridge Grove School (where I was graduated from elementary school and junior high) no longer exists, many of its former students and teachers got together that day. I even saw my first grade teacher, Gladys Smedley, who told me she still has a handkerchief I gave her in 1935! I saw again neighbors and classmates from the past, I remembered some, no longer living, I'd neglected to tell how much they meant to me. And I resolved to seek out others I need to thank now.

"If you want to show someone you love that you love them, then show them now," Perry said. "Come before winter."

If you have broken relationships, mend them now. If there is forgiveness you need to grant to someone, grant it now. "Come before winter."

If an opportunity is passing by, don't let it get away. If it's important, do it now. "Come before winter."

If the voice of Jesus is saying to you, "Come to me for forgiveness of your sin, and take me as your Savior," do it now. "Come before winter."

If Jesus is saying to you, "Go and tell that unsaved person about me," do it now. You may not have another chance. "Come before winter."

Perry told the story of a farmer who was intent on making money. Again and again as he and his wife would go to the store to buy supplies, she would lovingly touch a bolt of silk and ask if she might have a new dress made from it. But he would answer, "next year," or "next spring," or "maybe we can afford it later." Suddenly she took

the flu and died; then he remembered her request. He went to the store and asked for the whole bolt of silk.

"Do you know how much that costs?" the owner asked.

The man replied, "I don't care what it costs. Give me the whole bolt." He took the silk to the cemetery, and he wrapped it round and round her tombstone, crying, "Here it is, honey! here it is! here it is!"

Now it's January, 1991, and time once again for New Year's resolutions. One of mine is this: Whatever I need to do to show love, appreciation, forgiveness, reparation of wrong, I resolve that I will do it now — for "the iceman cometh."



"How Great Thou Art!" Harvey Allen, Moss Point, sings in sign language, during a meeting of Campers on Mission at Biloxi.



1st, Amory women make "comfort" dolls for elderly

The Mission Action Group of Baptist Women at First Church, Amory, has been busy for weeks on a special project of making, stuffing, painting, and dressing comfort dolls for residents of two homes for the elderly in their area.

Freida Coleman, then chairman of the group, conceived the idea from an article in July Royal Service in which women from Roanoke, Va., had done something similar.

Patterns had to be blown up, materials purchased and donated, dolls and dresses cut out and sewn, dolls stuffed and painted — one side awake, the other asleep — booties crocheted, hair and ribbons attached, and inspected for delivery. During the

making, many individuals have spent hours turning and stuffing, as well as sewing and painting. Extra meetings have been called for work nights.

"Through the time the project has been underway the women have had a feeling of love and camaraderie as they worked together in anticipation of the pleasure they will receive when they see the recipients of their labors of love receive the gifts," said one member.

Those unable to understand the nature of their gifts will not be forgotten but will receive useful gifts of handmade footwarmers or other appropriate items.

Afton Jones is present chairman of the group.



Liberty WMU members involved in the "comfort" doll project pictured left to right are Susan Cash, social director of ConvaRest, Ruby Jean Kennedy, Vivian Robinson, Vicky Williams, Eloise Garvin, Leora Simmons, Brenda Pierce, and Virginia Costilow.

The Hannah and Hazel Circles of WMU at Liberty Church, Newton, decided that making "comfort" dolls for the patients at ConvaRest Nursing Home was a worthwhile project to start.

"Well worth it, you better believe!" said the women of Newton. "Just seeing the light in the eyes and the smiles

on the faces of 124 patients was a blessing, indeed."

Many of the patients gave their dolls their own names, and became attached instantly to the adorable "little ones."

J. B. Costilow is pastor, Liberty Church, Newton.

January 8, 1991. Your card, letter, and/or call could be the key to restoring the historic ethical framework of the state.

Jones is executive director-treasurer of Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention.

The tests of life are to make, not break us. Trouble may demolish a man's business, but build up his character. The blow at the outward man may be the greatest blessing to the inner man. If God, then, puts or permits anything hard in our lives, be sure that the real peril, the real trouble, is what we shall lose if we flinch or rebel. — Maltbie Babcock

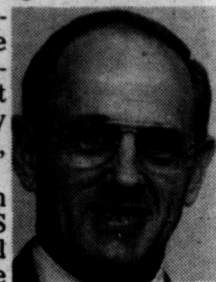
BSSB promotes Tom Hudson

NASHVILLE — Tom Hudson, adult Convention Uniform Series editor, has been named manager of the adult Convention Uniform Series/Bible Book Series curriculum section at the Baptist Sunday School Board, SBC.

Hudson has been editor of adult CUS Sunday School materials for five years and, before joining the board in January 1986, was pastor of Oak Forest Church in Jackson, Miss., for 21 years.

He was selected because of his strong biblical skills, years of pastoral experience, and ability to relate to people in a caring, sensitive way, said Max Caldwell, director of the Sunday School youth-adult department.

Hudson is a native of Jackson, Miss., and is a graduate of Mississippi College. He holds a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary and a doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Seminary.



Hudson

Churches create wholeness through family relationships

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP) — Churches should play integral, active roles in creating a feeling of family among members, a seminary professor and family ministry leader agree.

"All God's children need a family, and sometimes the families we create in a church setting are like foster families," said Diana Garland, professor of Christian social work at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Garland was guest speaker for the annual December family ministry planning meetings in Nashville. The meetings were sponsored by the Sunday School Board's Family Ministry Department.

"Churches ought to be about the business of creating family relationships," agreed Doug Anderson, director of the board's Family Ministry Department. "It is important to help the unmarried and the no longer married to create family-type relationships. Healthy singles have families of choice outside the church, and we should be in the business of creating those types of family networks inside the church."

Among the resources the Family Ministry Department introduced to state directors as a tool to strengthen families, Anderson said, is the new Parenting by Grace course, "Christian Self-Esteem: Parenting by Grace." The course, which recently was field-tested by about 1,500 people, is expected to be released in October 1991.

Christian sex education resources will be field tested in the spring, according to Anderson, who said the "much-needed" materials will be released in 1992. They are designed to be used by parents for teaching Christian values in sex education.

Evangelism resources for senior adults, single adults, and families are presently available, he said. "Seniors Reaching Seniors," "Families Reaching Families" and "Every Single Won" are the 1990-91 emphasis books available as evangelism tools, he said.

Lackey writes for BSSB.

STATUS QUO

From page 6

Third, keep the controversy out of local churches. The local churches are still the seat of authority as they operate through democratic processes under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Pray that His will, not ours, be done. According to my observation the controversy has gotten into local churches through the pastor.

Fourth, exercise Christian love (agape) toward one another. We do not need to agree with another's life style to love in this sense (Rom. 5:8). Jesus said that it is by our love for each other that people will recognize us as His disciples. Remember that "unity in diversity" has always marked our relationship as Southern Baptists.

Fifth, broaden the base of committee and trustee appointments. For 12 years the election of presidents has been too close to constitute a "conservative" mandate. The rule "To the victor belongs the spoils" should not apply in Christian relationships.

Sixth, recognize that the terms "conservative" and "moderate" are political rather than theological designations. Like myself, many strongly conservative people do not identify with either faction.

Of late I read reports of group meetings to talk about possible solutions to our present status quo. But those invited are all on one side of the issue. Decisions reached in such one-sided meetings will not solve our problem. Such talks should involve people representing all shades of thought.

Seventh, "findings" in the Peace Committee report should not be ap-

plied as "recommendations." To be sure, all parts of the report are equally important in their place. But one segment should not be applied other than as its title indicates.

Eighth, do not hold the Cooperative Program hostage in the controversy. I truly believe that it was revealed to us by God. To tamper with it is to invite disaster for everything Southern Baptists are trying to do. God has blessed it beyond measure. Despite our differences there are other roads toward their solution. There are no quick fixes to our problems. It took a generation to get into them. It will take a generation to solve them. In the meantime we must find ways to stay together and work together.

Ninth, according to the Constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention, its purpose is not to regulate doctrine but to harness the power in our churches for missions and evangelism.

Tenth, if we continue on our present path God may well turn to another people. He has never changed His purpose. But He has repeatedly changed His people in accomplishing His purpose. To quote Dr. George W. Truett, if that happens to us, over our door will be written, "Ichabod!" — "The glory has departed." God forbid!

Hobbs is pastor emeritus, First Church, Oklahoma City, and former president, SBC.

Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary. — Reinhold Niebuhr



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LATEST BILLS

From page 4

dum calling for a constitutional amendment.

HEALTH

HB 164 would prohibit smoking at public high schools.

HB 183 would prohibit use of tobacco vending machines.

OBSCENITY

SB 2050 would revise certain definitions in the obscenity law. This is necessary to conform the present statute to recent court rulings.

Your attention is needed immediately. Your representative and senator need to hear from you before the Legislature meets on Tuesday,



Acts, Too, is a drama ministry team sponsored by the Mississippi State Baptist Student Union. They perform a wide variety of skits for use in church services, fellowships, banquets, revivals, and retreats. Acts, Too, can perform for all age groups, but their main objective is youth ministry. For more information write Baptist Student Union, P. O. Box BU, Mississippi State, MS 39762 or call (601) 323-5761. Pictured counterclockwise beginning at upper left are Michael Bowers, New Orleans, La.; Matt Haines, Columbus; Jenny Crigler, Columbus; Leigh Henry, Vancleave; Beth Gaydon, Starkville; Carol Moore, Hixson, Tenn.; Kim Ethridge, Hattiesburg; Laura Davis, Starkville; Jon Cooper, Eupora; Dean Johnson, Hunstville, Ala.



Harrisville Church, Simpson Association, recently celebrated homecoming and dedicated its new addition. The new building includes a fellowship hall, a choir room with a music library, two classrooms, and restrooms. The building committee was presented plaques for a job well done. Left to right are pastor Dennis E. Allen; chairman of deacons, J. P. Dear; committee members, Wayne Leming, Gene Erwin, Charles Lewis, and James Harris, chairman; not pictured, Doug Grantham.



Tuscumbia Church, Prentiss Association, had a note burning on Sept. 9. The church has 23 acres of land in the city limits of Booneville. The pastorium along with a newly established cemetery is located on the grounds.

Pictured, left to right are Ben Griffin, pastor; deacons Ronnie Hatfield, Horace Hudleston, Jimmy Bonds, Jimmy Henderson, Ronnie Chase, David Jones, Lex Cain, and Wallace Johnson.

Simpson Association churches observed Missionary Blitz Day on Dec. 9. Fifteen churches participated in inviting a missionary speaker to share about the work on the foreign mission fields. The emphasis was sponsored by the associational WMU department, Mrs. Johnnie Traxler, director. Each church was given a challenge to promote and give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. H. Glen Schilling is director of missions.

A special prayer service was held on Monday, Dec. 3 at the National Guard Armory in Mendenhall for the Magee and Mendenhall guards who were called to active duty. H. Glen Schilling, director of missions, led in the organization of the prayer service. The testimonies, scripture readings, special music, and times of prayer were an inspiration to the entire county, according to Schilling.

Carterville Church, Petal, will have dedication for its new sanctuary and administrative and music suite, Jan. 6, at 4 p.m. Eddie L. Hamilton, pastor of Oak Forest Church, Jackson, and president, MBCB, will be the guest speaker. Open house will follow. Leland M. Hogan is pastor.

Some 400 guests and performers gathered at Clarke College for "Christmas On The Circle," Dec. 3.

This was an endeavor of Christmas celebration in which 10 city and rural churches in Newton County participated. Each church prepared a Christmas scene, with lighting around the circular campus at Clarke. Guests were served refreshments in the campus library and were ushered around the circle to view each scene individually. Lottie Moon offerings were accepted upon completion of the tour.

Old principles, new techniques needed for '90s, leaders say

By Jim Newton and Mark Wingfield

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (BP) — Reaching people with the gospel in the 1990s will require mixing time-honored principles with innovative methods before the time is too late, Morris Chapman and Larry Lewis said.

Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Lewis, president of the SBC Home Mission Board, spoke to state evangelism directors and state mission directors during their annual meetings in Scottsdale, Ariz.

"I believe the harvest is passing in America," Chapman told the group. "I believe God is writing across the sky in boxcar letters: Get right."

Delivering this message to America will require new techniques, Chapman declared, because of rapid changes in society.

"The profile of America is changing," he said. "The Bible Belt is disappearing."

To meet the challenge, "the cry of our hearts needs to be to have a passion for souls," he said. "We need to be personal soul winners."

In an earlier address, Lewis cited six principles Baptists must not forsake in developing new and innovative methods for reaching people in the '90s.

First, Baptists must proclaim the gospel with celebrative worship that includes exciting music and dynamic preaching "from a red-hot pulpit where God's word is expounded," Lewis said.

He called for pastors to be prophets, confronting immorality, sin and corruption in society. "Too many times, the pulpit is silent because the pastor does not want to offend anyone."

Second, Baptists must emphasize quality programming that includes in-depth Bible study, discipleship training, and missions education, he said.

Pointing to the tremendous growth of such mega-churches as the Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, Korea, Lewis said Baptists need to seriously consider the house-church and cell-group approach.

Third, Lewis said Baptist churches

need to make evangelism and personal soul winning the responsibility of every member, not just the pastor and staff.

Fourth, Baptists need to focus on "Christ-centered, Bible-based redemptive ministries" which meet the needs of people in the community. "I believe the best way to reach people is to minister to their needs by asking, 'Where do you hurt and how can we help?'"

Fifth, Baptists need to emphasize growth by extension as well as growth by expansion. "The best way for a church to grow is by starting missions wherever the people are," Lewis said.

He warned against inner city churches in transitional communities of moving to the suburbs and leaving the inner core without a Baptist witness. Instead, churches must focus on starting new missions to reach racially and ethnically changing communities, he suggested.

Newton and Wingfield write for HMB.

Neshoba calls Barker as DOM

Leo V. Barker has begun work as the new director of missions for Neshoba County Association. His office is in Philadelphia, at 903 Valley View Drive.

Barker moved to this position from the pastorate of First Church, Baldwin. He is a graduate of Clarke College, Livingston University, and New Orleans Seminary. Eastview Church, Meridian, ordained him in 1954.

His own pastorates have included Noxapater Church, East Philadelphia Church, and Linwood Church, plus student pastorates in Kemper and Neshoba counties.

Barker has served as a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and of its Executive Committee. Also he has been on the New Church Expansion Committee and the Budget Committee, MBCB. At present, he is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Children's Village.

He and his wife, the former Bonnie Barker, have two sons, Jackie, of Philadelphia, and Gary, of Ripley.



Barker

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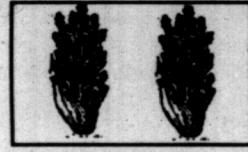










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How do you hear the Word?

By Ruth N. Allen

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Jesus' use of parables increased dramatically in the twelfth chapter of Matthew's gospel. Because of the large number and length of



Allen

parables spoken by Jesus and his many other activities, the day Jesus spoke the parable of the sower has often been called the "busy day." This parable is foundational to Christian living and witnessing. Misunderstanding and failure to heed the teaching of Jesus is less likely because he chose to interpret the parable. In comparing the soils' productivity, he issues a call to us to respond affirmatively to become productive and useful.

Years ago I learned what has become a basic tenet of my Christian experience: Without an understanding of the Word of God there is no salvation, and without an understanding of the Word of God there is no consecration. Jesus emphasizes the same teaching with the parable of the sower. Thus the sower is compelled to sow

UNIFORM

while the recipient (soil) is compelled to respond.

The sower uses only "good" seed, which is the Word of God, for good seed guarantees successful results. The sower's obligation is to sow with the "good" seed; the soils will then respond according to capabilities. This concept is best illustrated in an article which appeared some years ago in the Billy Graham Decision magazine. The writer's four steps are as follows: 1. know it in your heart, 2. stow it in your mind, 3. show it in your life, and 4. sow it in the world. This criteria, when practiced, can become an effective method for sharing the gospel of truth in our lives. There are homes, communities and nations which await the witness of Christians who will sow the gospel seed. Jesus set the example as sower, and his word provided the "good" seed. Those who love and follow him assume their roles as sower when they diligently present God's truth in every facet of life. The "good" seed is easily obtained through prayer and Bible study prepared for broadcasting in Christian lives.

Jesus uses the analogy of four soils to depict four types of hearers. He also indicates the condition of the soil will determine productivity. In Jesus' day, a sower used the broadcast method. Lacking sophisticated farming implements, he carried seed in a pouch or basket which he broadcast by hand. The seed lay where it was cast. It was accidental sowing. Fertile and ready soil produced; others did not, and the seed suffered the consequence.

Some seed fell on stony ground. Birds devouring the seed immediately enjoyed a free meal. Jesus compared this soil to a cold and indifferent person who allows Satan to come and snatch the Word away before it has a chance to grow.

Other seed fell upon layers of thin soil. Immediately plants sprang up but could not endure because there were no roots. Often on television documentaries one can see examples of rain falling on parched desert land. Through time exposure filming, one can see plants spring up almost overnight and then die just as quickly. Such is the person who receives the Word with joy but, because there are no roots of faith, does not endure.

Still other seed fell among thorns. These also

began to grow but the thorns choked the plants, causing them to wither and die. This action in the parable symbolizes persons who allow cares of the world and pursuit of pleasure and gain to dominate.

However, some seed fell on good soil! What a combination, good seed planted on good soil! The seed sprang up and bore fruit because they had roots and nourishment. Some brought forth thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold. Readers would do well to note Jesus was not talking about percentages. Jesus has never allowed for anything less than one hundred percent. Whether the soil produced thirty, sixty or one hundredfold, production was according to capabilities.

A part of the study of Mississippi history is devoted to the different types of soils. Four areas in Mississippi which exemplify this teaching of Jesus are: rich Delta soil, northeast Black Belt, red clay hills, and the sandy coastal loam. All soils produce, but the yield varies immensely. Each produces according to ability.

Am I giving the Word of God my fair share of study and proclamation?

Allen, of Jackson, is the wife of the pastor of Ogden Church, Bentonla.

Count the cost of commitment to Christ

By Jerry Vardaman

Luke 13:22-14:35

In this section of Luke's dealing with the last months of Jesus' days in the flesh, Christ sets forth by word and example how we are to live.



Vardaman

It is not too late in this new year to resolve again that Jesus shall come first in your life through all the days ahead. Jonathan Edwards was right to resolve that God would come first in his life, whether or not anyone else resolved to do so! Luke 13:24-30 — Commitment will satisfy your life. Many Jews in the time of Jesus believed that God made the Gentiles only to serve as cordwood for the flames of hell! The old refrain would have expressed their opinion perfectly: "Oh, we are among the saved, and you are among the damned; There's room in hell for you, we can't have heaven crammed!"

Jesus punctured this false balloon of an idea by saying that no one could be saved on the basis of race, pride, or tradition. The Jews had a belief that Abraham stood at the gates of hell and would not suffer an Israelite to enter. Jesus asserted that no one would go to heaven simply on the basis of being an Israelite — one must accept Jesus as Lord and serve him out of

BIBLE BOOK

gratitude and love.

Luke 13:31-35 — Commitment will fortify your life.

Herod the Tetrarch desired to kill Jesus according to the warning of the Pharisees. This warning did not frighten Jesus or divert him from his mission or schedule. It is not certain just where this warning was spoken to Jesus. Herod Antipas controlled the temple after the removal of Archelaus in A.D. 6/7, and therefore frequently came to Jerusalem to oversee the functioning of this institution (Luke 23:7), especially at times of festivals like the Passover.

There are those who are easily diverted from some high calling or purpose. They are ready to change their plans for the slightest reasons instead of staying with a task. Jesus knew that when he went to Jerusalem he would die (13:33), but he went anyway. No wonder that the threats of Herod Antipas did not faze him. Sadly, we live in a day of "Charlie McCarthy" Christians. What some power clique tells us we should believe, do, or say, we say, we believe, and we do! Jesus was guided by the will of his heavenly Father, not thrown off track by hypocritical Pharisees nor by Antipas, a puppet ruler whose reign was soon to end.

Luke 14:1-14 — Commitment will beautify

your life.

Jesus lived in a day of legalism — not far different from our own age in reality. There are those who believe that if they restore all of the Old Testament legal requirements, it will please God (a movement called "Biblical Reconstructionism"). This is just misdirected oversimplification. Just as Jesus rejected the narrow interpretations of the scribes and Pharisees of his day, he would reject today's plans and propositions of the Reconstructionists (or New Age movement).

Look how Jesus instructed us that the Sabbath was to be kept — it is permissible and demanded that we do good on the Sabbath day! The Essenes (extreme Pharisees) of Jesus' day even taught that if a man fell into a well or pit on the Sabbath, one was not to help him out. Jesus' teachings outshine the teachings of the Essenes as the sun outshines a rock of black basalt. As his life was truly beautiful and lovely, when we follow his teachings, our lives will reflect the same beauty.

Note some "beauty marks" of true Christians:

True Christians will be friends to the needy, poor, and physically disabled, inviting them through the front door (Luke 14:13). True Christians will be characterized by humility, a spirit of service, and an esteem for others above themselves (Luke 14:7-9). True Christians will readily accept opportunities for service and the

invitation to enjoy the delight of God's banquet of fellowship with those who love him and are committed to him (Luke 14:15-24).

Luke 14:25-35 — Commitment could crucify (and glorify!) your life.

When Jesus saw great numbers following him, he gave a warning. Following him could be dangerous! It could lead to the death of his true disciples.

Some years ago, (just after serving as president of the Baptist World Alliance) George W. Truett was sent around the world on a tour of the far-flung mission posts of our Foreign Mission Board. When he returned, he told the story of standing on the very spot where a young Chinese boy gave his life for Jesus. It was during the Boxer Rebellion (just before 1900) when zealous Chinese nationalists sought to expel all foreigners and their influence. Boxer extremists broke into one of the Baptist mission stations and killed every Christian except this 9-year-old boy. They had taken a picture of Jesus down from the wall and three times asked the boy to step on the face of Jesus. Each time he refused, and they finally killed him.

What would you do? May God grant us the will to live up to Jesus' challenge, "... whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple," (Luke 14:27).

Vardaman is professor of archaeology, Miss. State University.

Repentance provides release from sin's enslavement

By Benny Still

John 8:21-27, 31-36

New Year's resolutions have always baffled me. Why make them if you can not keep them? Year after year we set ourselves up to feel guilty



Still

after making goals that we have little or no intention of keeping. We Baptists are famous for our hymn, "I Am Resolved" which we sing with gusto on the first Sunday of each new year. We say as we sing, "I am resolved no longer to linger, charmed by the world's delights." We are in effect saying a hearty, "No siree! I will not be duped by the sin of this

world anymore!" Then, before we know it, we have again succumbed to the temptations "that so easily beset us" (Heb. 12:1). Many will tell us that sin separates man from God. That men sin is a foregone conclusion. Is it sin in general that creates the gap or one sin in particular that keeps us from our God? Jesus told the Pharisees in this week's lesson that unless they believed in him "they would indeed die in their sins" (vss. 21, 24). It is then that unbelief in the Saviour, Jesus Christ, separates us from God. It is that same unbelief that blocks our spiritual understanding and prevents

LIFE AND WORK

us from recognizing who Jesus is and accepting the truth of his words.

When the lost man repents of his sin of unbelief and trusts Jesus for the salvation of his soul, all is well — or is it? He has just been absolved for that which has kept him from his God. Is there now another hurdle to cross? Armed with his newfound faith, this new convert now has to face the daily temptations that Satan throws his way. It is this daily sin that creates a barrier between the heavenly Father and his earthly children. This sin in the life of the Christian damages our relationship with the Father, much like that which occurs when a child is disobedient to a parent. We need to recognize that our sin can be forgiven and our relationship with the Father can be restored. It is, however, the sin of unbelief that will ultimately determine the unbeliever's destiny in hell (vs. 24).

Christians have been set free from the bondage of sin, but nowhere in the Word of God do we find that as a result of our freedom we have a license to sin. We say we believe in Jesus. Great! What advantage does that belief give us over the devils of hell? James 2:19 tells us that

even the "devils believe and tremble." For the Christian, "believe" means to trust in God completely; it's more than just the knowledge in our heads. We Christians have the assurance that we are free from the penalty of sin: death in hell. But we have a terrible time trying to be free from the little sins for which we fail to truly repent. You know the ones I mean, those that we don't want God to know we're involved in. Surprise! He already knows about them and he desperately wants us to confess them to him so we can have a right relationship with him again. Perhaps the adage "God gets blamed for lots of things he has nothing to do with" applies here. Turning our backs on our "little sins" may be as dangerous as pretending that the rattlesnake coiled up behind you won't strike!

What a joy to be free! Jesus said, "If you hold to my teachings, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (vss. 31a-32). Being set free means turned loose. Have you ever wondered what it would mean for you to be "turned loose for Jesus?" Think of it! Will the Lord ever "turn us loose" for him if we are not really his disciples in the first place? I doubt it!

Too many of us have been jerked in the front door of our churches and been baptized out the back at the same time. If we would be free from sin's enslavement, then we must repent of the sin of tradition as well and seek to disciple those

we convert to Christ. Let us help our new Christian friends know what their responsibilities are as children of the heavenly King. By discipling them we will be true to the words of Jesus as we "hold to his teachings" and "really be his disciples" (vs. 31).

Jesus said, "Anyone who sins is a slave to sin" (vs. 34). Slaves belong to their owners and are charged with doing assigned work tasks for their masters. They have no permanent place in the family for whom they work. They have very few, if any, privileges, and are not allowed to take any initiative to do anything other than what they are told. As such, their spirits are dead.

The son, on the other hand, belongs forever to his family. He is given all the privileges of his inheritance. He is allowed to exercise his initiative and reach new heights as he implements his ideas and dreams. His spirit is alive!

What a contrast! What a joy to know that we are free from the penalty of sin and have assurance that forgiveness from daily sin is ours when we confess it to the Father. God really does want to meet our needs, every one of them. And he will do just that as we allow him to set us free from the enslavement of sin.

Still is minister of music and youth at Woodville Church, Woodville, and pastor of Adams Baptist Mission.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

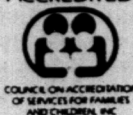


The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

ACCREDITED

P. O. Box 27,
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242



Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

Nov. 1, 1990 -
Nov. 30, 1990

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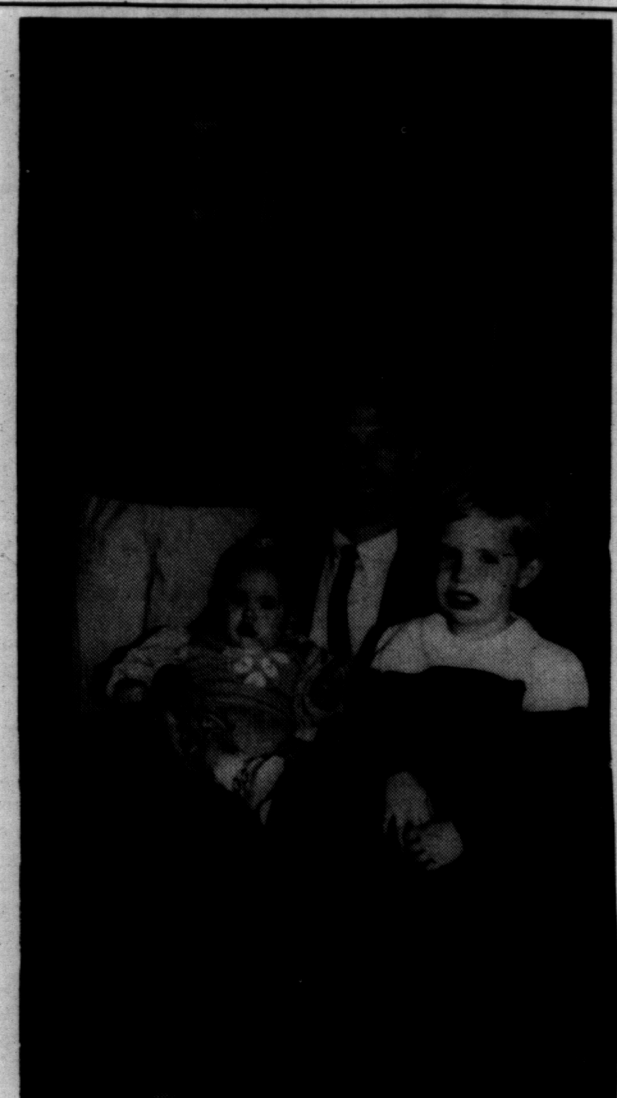
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Mr. Carl Willis joined our staff December 1, 1990 as Unit Director for Extended Care on our India Nunnery Campus and Dickerson Place Campus.

Mr. Willis came to us from Jackson De La Howe School, South Carolina State School for Children where he served as Chaplain/Unit Coordinator for 3½ years. Before that he served as Coordinator of Religious Life and Activities at the Georgia Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries in Meansville, Georgia. He is a native of Pelham, Georgia and a graduate of Southeastern Seminary and University of Georgia. Mr. Willis is married to Chris Barker of Owensboro, Kentucky and has two children — Christopher, age 4 and Casey, age 6 months.

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Book reviews

BIND US TOGETHER — The Church And Older Members is the title of Pat Gullledge's new book, published by Dallas Printing Company, Inc., of Jackson, Miss. In this book, Gullledge focuses upon two significant entities . . . the church and older members of the church. He recognizes what seems to be a general condition of our time — a widening gap of indifference within the church toward the older members of the congregation.

The author's experiences as a denominational leader, a church staff member, a member of a local church, and as a senior adult have enabled him to witness firsthand this gap of indifference. His keen sensitivity to this need has motivated him to seek a narrowing of the gap through a better understanding of both the church and the older adults. Such an understanding forms the foundation for building stronger and more meaningful relationships.

The concept of the church as the body of Christ is used to stress the importance of caring and compassion in developing a healthy organism. Gullledge makes a stronger appeal for love and caring in the church's attempt to relate to older members. This concern should result in new approaches toward designing programs, services, and facilities appropriate to the needs of senior adults.

The focus upon older members within our churches highlights some of their common hurts. A large section of the book is devoted to naming and defining many of these hurts, and offers practical suggestions for meeting crisis needs among the elderly. The author lists 27 specific hurts experienced by older people.

The warm-hearted, clearly-stated counsel contained in the book will be of great benefit to those who work with the older population within our society. The book would make an excellent text for group study within the churches. Pastors will find here a valuable resource in counselling older church members concerning specific problems. Individual study of the book by older people will be extremely beneficial.

This book should find a prominent place upon the shelves of all those who share Pat Gullledge's dream of binding churches and older members into more meaningful fellowship and ministry. — Reviewed by W. Levon Moore, Kosciusko.

Smith, Ebbie C.; "BALANCED CHURCH GROWTH"; Broadman, 1984, 176 pp.

Smith is the associate professor of Christian ethics and missions at Southwestern Seminary. He has served as a foreign missionary to Indonesia for 15 years. He received his education from Hardin-Simmons Univ, BA; Southwestern Seminary, M. DIV, Th.D., Ph.D.; and Fuller Seminary, MA.

Smith writes about an issue that concerns every minister: church growth. He begins with the idea that we must catch the vision in order for our church to grow. It is essential that we see the need and work toward the fulfillment of that need with God's help.

Smith further expands his discussion where he focuses on the basics of church growth. He relates the idea that we must test each strategy planned to grow a church.

He says that we must begin to discover and examine the whys of church growth. Smith further dis-

cusses the importance of overcoming obstacles that will hinder church growth. He begins by discussing the importance of overcoming problems which mar the image of the church. One important factor toward church growth is finding different keys that will open many doors, enabling a church to grow. Smith ends with the model of servanthood as the leadership style that is very effective.

This is an excellent book that will enable a church to re-discover its purpose for ministry. It will help the pastor think positively amidst all the negative criticism faced today. Reviewed by Dwayne Kelly, pastor, Rockhill Church, Mt. Olive.

The Holy Spirit, God's Executive, written in Portuguese by David Gomes, well-known author and pastor. He has also written the following books, published in Portuguese: *Jesus Christ is Coming*; *The Jew called Abraham*; *Practical Theology* in two volumes; *A Happy Marriage — a Walk of Three*; and *Questions that the Bible Answers*. Anne McWilliams wrote a book which is his biography, *David Gomes, When Faith Triumphs*, published by Broadman Press.

While talking with some of the faculty of the Brazilian Baptist Seminary of South Brazil, the author was impressed with the need of a book in Brazil that would treat the subject of the Holy Spirit in a broader and more practical way in order to help churches and God's servants. Therefore, he wrote this book to fulfill this purpose.

The book is scholarly, with a glossary of 121 reference books; yet the book is not just a resume of other men's thoughts, but David Gomes' own profound insight about the person of the Holy Spirit. The book is written in a style easily understood by most church members even in treatment of complicated theological subjects.

David Gomes says that the main purpose of the book is to bring about an awakening among God's people. He states that of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is the least known and he sets about in this book to explain how we can know him better.

The author treats the following subjects in this book:

1. The person of the Holy Spirit as revealed in God's Word
2. The gift of the Spirit
3. The experience of the Holy Spirit in the life of each Christian.
4. The Holy Spirit comes to each Christian at conversion to enable him to serve as God wills
5. The role of the Holy Spirit in bringing salvation to mankind through Christ
6. The Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts
7. The imposing of hands to receive the Holy Spirit, what it means
8. The Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues
9. The power of the Holy Spirit in evangelism
10. The filling of the Holy Spirit
11. Taking advantage of the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit
12. The Holy Spirit prepares warriors for spiritual battle

These points and the many subtitles lead the reader to a deeper and fuller understanding of the Holy Spirit as God's executive.

It would be good if this book with all its wonderful insights could be translated into English for publication in this country.

The book is so good that I took 15 pages of notes for my personal use. —Edward Trott, Jackson, missionary emeritus to Brazil

Gulfport volunteer teaches in China

By Jean Hillman Allgood

As the train pulled out of the station in Hong Kong to take 45 American teachers — mostly retired — as volunteers to various colleges in mainland China where we would teach conversational English, our own conversations were muted, guarded, and sparse. We were still in awe that Cooperative Services International had arranged for us to be a "first" in group teaching in China universities.

The train picked up speed — I was apprehensive but unafraid as I stared out the open window.

I began to reflect on who I am, where I come from, where I am going, and why God let me be chosen. Was it God's leadership and did I really want to magnify and exemplify him in my life these next six or eight weeks? (We could not openly witness — only through our lives.) Yes, I really wanted to make an impact as a Christian through my teaching; I began to conjure up ways right then for my "China experience." The train moved on . . . all but 17 got off in Guangzhou for other places.

Two-and-a-half days later by train and one short plane ride, we were met by Dr. Huang, foreign affairs director at Guangxi University in Nanning, and Ken Loche, CSI representative at Guangxi.

At three o'clock Monday, with temperatures in the high 90s — they were to go higher — we met 175 students in a large room with neither "air" nor fan. We each were given a Chinese hand fan!!! Mine is being preserved as an antique for it was used four to six hours every day, without exception, for five weeks! Cotton clothes were a must. There was no ice. I adjusted quickly, as did others.

Our "students" were high school teachers, some 10 or 12 college professors and perhaps a dozen professionals from the city. Each was specially chosen for this session, some riding as much as 21 hours to get to the city. Most of them had never been away from their places of birth for more than a three-or-four-hour ride. Only one in my homeroom class had ever seen an American or heard an English word spoken. There were a few who could carry on a limited conversation in English.

In my assigned room, I met my VERY TENSE Chinese students. One cannot imagine just how tense — being in the same room with an AMERICAN! I assured them, as I wrote ALLGOOD on the board, that I would be just that to them: all good. One hour later, with the aid of the map I had brought along, they had an idea

where Gulfport, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Mississippi River are. I also told them of our banana terminal. Terminal, gulf, and port, were our first words to learn to pronounce. I saw immediately their voracious appetite for learning; I was in love with them from that moment on. That afternoon I gave them all an English name that I could pronounce.

We were admonished to carry materials along to supplement the simple textbook; I had brought a great many which proved helpful. They worked diligently every minute. I used my keyboard to teach them "oldies, but goodies," that had a slow rhythm. Now many Chinese can sing the "Tennessee Waltz," "You Are My Sunshine," "Country Roads," "Silent Night," "Silver Bells," "Jingle Bells," "I've Got Peace Like a River," and others. One of the favorites was, "It Isn't Any Trouble Just to S-M-I-L-E"; and with it I was able to teach about kindness, love, and concern for others. Though we were not able to openly witness, it was easy to show one's lifestyle by demeanor and disposition. I wrote a little song about China, and we learned it along with "God Bless America."

I had loved the Chinese people with whom I worked in a church in Venezuela on my first mission trip overseas. I am now more impressed by their capability to love, their kind spirit, soft voices, graciousness, and gratitude. To say "thank you" once is never enough. I pray for these people daily; God will hear!

We had fun times doing a "mock" American wedding, an Easter egg hunt, and an American birthday party. Memories for them and for me.

The last day or two many brought

gifts — simple gifts — to our rooms. Almost without exception the card read, "I will remember you forever; you are always in my heart."

Many who were still on campus went to the train with us. For 10 or 15 minutes we sang every song that we had learned. As the train slowly moved we teachers sang out the windows: "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing in Perfect Harmony . . ."

I wouldn't trade it for anything that I have done up to this point in my life. As Stephan (his English name) wrote to me, "A golden bridge has been built between China and America. Let the two countries know well each other and have friendship. We, as students, will remember your work forever."

My prayer is that a bridge has been built more important than one between two countries — one between man and God, the creator of everything, everyone, in every land — China as no exception.

Allgood lives in Gulfport.



Allgood, right, with Dr. Huang, foreign affairs director of Guangxi University, second from left, and students.



Allgood's class sings an American song after receiving their "graduation" certificates.

Russian visits Mississippi



Pictured with MCB Executive Director Bill Causey (center), are Larissa Alexeeva and Tom McLaughlin. McLaughlin is BSU director at Mississippi Delta Community College and Alexeeva is a visitor from Leningrad, USSR. She and McLaughlin met this summer when he and fellow BSU director, Joe Cobb, led a group of Mississippi Baptist students to that Russian city to help renovate a church. Alexeeva served as volunteer translator for the group. A former teacher of English at the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute, she first went to church at age 14 where she "believed Jesus Christ in my heart" after her mother became a church member in 1953. She came to the States for a "moral and spiritual rest," she said during her reunion with McLaughlin. She presented Causey with a Leningrad pin which he is holding.

Baptist Record

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